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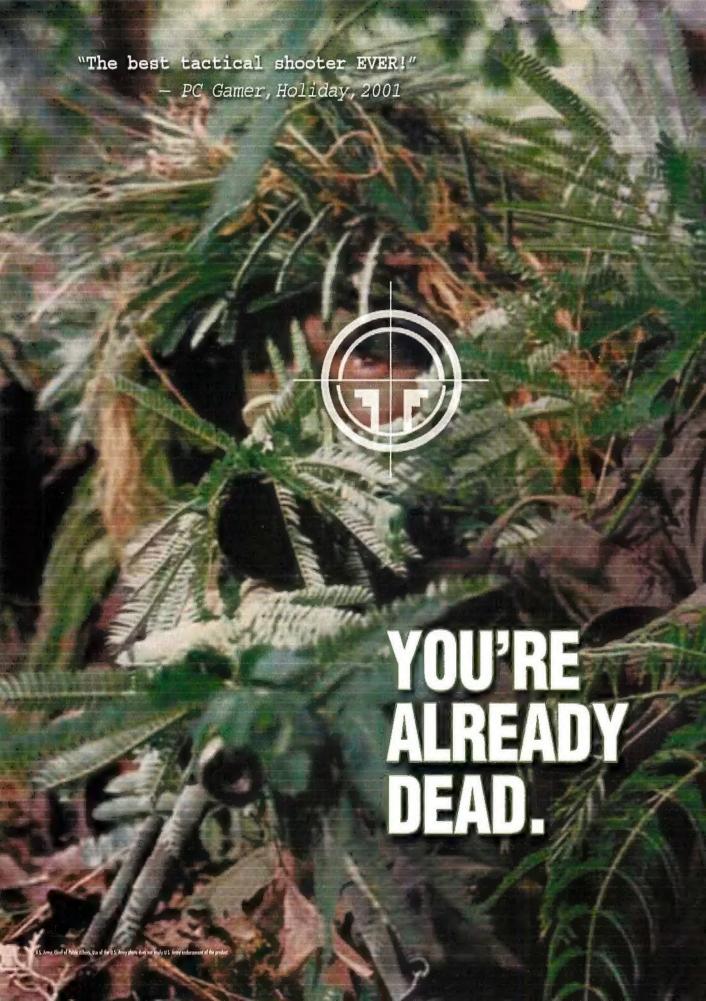
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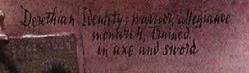
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"YOU ARE ABOUT TO EMBARK UPON THE GREAT CRUSADE."

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, D-Day.



Violence

PC CD ROM

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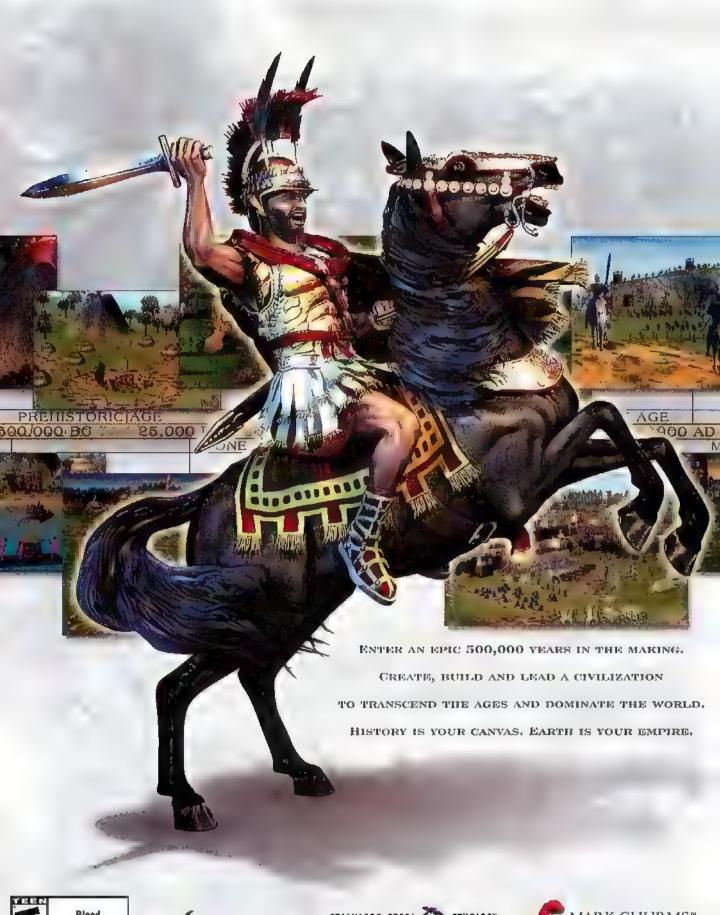
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AJAIL ABLANCE ON A



The Resident Grown-Up

never dreamed that at age 28, I'd be a mother of nine. Two months ago, I was livred as the managing editor for CGW. Typically, a managing editor is the organizer for a magazine. She's the one to set the deadlines, make sure things ship to the printer, set up ingetings, etc. The responsible stuff

Here it goes way beyond organizing. "Andrew, you're not allowed to play Madden with Will until you get that feature laid out. Robert, are you playing Mystery of the Druids again? Your reviews were due last week-you're grounded to your office until they're finished!" Last week Tom asked me a question and accidentally called me Mom.

We had a meeting to brainsform cover story ideas a few days ago. Since Jeff and Ken were busy lighting over who got which Krispy Kreme, Lasked, "What are some of the locas that people have for next month?"

"I know jujitsul" shouted Scooler. Tom chucked a piece of doughnut at Wil Robert started singing a Red Hot Chili Peppers song in his Howard Coself-does-opera voice: "Give it away, give it away, give it away now!" Jason asked, "Are we done yet? I need to get back to my desk because my necromancer's about to level up." I went to my office and cried.

The guys have had the rown share of frustration with me. The last game i played on a regular basis was computer solitaire. My first week, Robert came into my office and handed me a box, saying, "Here's the latest MMORPG, should be the greatest thing since the EQ: Scars of Vellous expansion." When he registered the befulded dook on my face, he took back the box and said, "Never mind, why don't you try this fun game instead—it's called Bejeweled." They now recognize my perpetual took of confusion and will stop to explain terms like mech and kludge or to recount the entire history of the Myth franchise.

There are great things about my new job. I know lots of fun new acronyms. I can egitim ze my newly developed *Bejeweled* addiction by reassuring myself that it's okay, I work on a gaming magazine, this is part of my job. My boyfriend thinks I have the coolest job ever because I bring him games. And having a boss who likes to put things off can be good—it's easy to talk him into letting us leave the office early to go play poor.

Now if you'll excuse me, there are some articles overdue-I have to go confiscate Return to Castle Worlenstein

Dana Jongewaard Managing Editor

boyfriend
thinks I
have the
coolest
job ever
because I
bring him
games.

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Letters

Send hate mail and brownie recipes to cgwletters@ziffdavis.com

LETTER OF THE MONTH

While reading from Price | review of May - avoid November 2001 had to cause and all misself the moreon am property action to the second Finalish basics such as now the Band or the works or Dashiell Hammert, Irvine Welsh, or James Ellroy?" Fit like remension myself remember infelliged but I bidly men medico or an English major to thomograph appreciate eview in CCW. The article was well written and control out who was the review's baroot audient. The Bhojish III professor at Harvard? Next time could you just say the writing sucked?

> G. Gray Cloverdale, California

your letter struck a chord here at COW. G. remains it was the tone of quiet desperation, so famously recognized by Thereau as one of modern man's greatest afflictions, that affected us. Or perhaps if was your Joycean sense of outraged anti-intellectual intellec tualism that impressed us no. On perhaps you're lust a meron



Sergeant Shifrin Sets **Everyone Straight**

Greetings, esteemed ones of CGWII A quick response to a letter written by Avbara Wolf in the December 2001 issue-and a defense for Tom McDonald.

Aybara should look a bit deeper into history, I've been on active duty in the Army for about 16 years (I can retire in four more years and then work for the ancient one. Jeff Green) and stationed in Germany for nine of those I6 years. Of course, in the military, we are required to learn nuggets of lore so we can spout them off with confidence when asked.

Now, Aybara does correctly state that the German word for tank is "Panzer," But if you look a bit further back in history-say, around World War I-tanks were not originally called tanks. Because of their design, the WWI tank looked like a water cistern (a term used by the British Army), "Cistern" is simply another word for tank-i.e., "water tank." Over a period of time (and possibly due to some American language influence), the term "tank" Instead of "cistern" stuck.

As far as fliegen goes, I have NO idea where that came from. Tom McDonald is on his own there.

Keep up the fine work and I'll keep my subscription intact.

D. Shifrin Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army

Rule One of Fight Club: Don't Mention the Ads

On page 80 of issue 208, there is a black-and-white ad for Civ III Teaturing



Gandhi Eghting Abraham Lincoln. I believe this is a nod to Fight Club Lincoln and Gandhi are the two historical figures Brad Pitt and Ed Norton's characters said they'd want to fight. Canada sticks,

Jeremy

Wow, good catch, Jeremy. But what's with the slur against

Canada? We don't condone that kind of behavior around here.

More Bejeweled Tales

My wife has never understood why I choose playing video games over mowing the lawn, working, and bathing (thanks Ever Ovest). So I built her a Pentium III IGHz system with GeForce2 (she was, of course, unimpressed), with the hope of getting her into gaming Maybe start off with Barble Equestrian or something, and work up to Diablo II all-nighters. No lick. Then came Bejeweled, "Hey honey! Check out this pretty jewel game!" Now she spends more time playing that than I spend playing MY games! All hail Bejeweled! Of course now, nights out, dinner, and sex are out of the question, Ummm...l golta go get a life now.

Dan Beima Carlsbad, California

I've subscribed for about two years, I know that's nothing compared to your Big-Time Subscribers, but I'm only 14, so BACK OFF! Okay, now I Just wanted to tell you all that your magazine kicks major butt. And also, my lifelong goal is to make it into the top 15 scorers for Beleweled on Zone.com, I'm ranked like 735,274 right now-I'm almost there!



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- High quality graphics using the latest modeling and rendering techniques:
- . Multi-player with up to 8 bikes via LAN or the internet













The kids have: anough gaming magazines. Bo a MAN's magazine. Be a cross between Maxim, High Times, and Mad magazine

Blaze a

Mr. Rhee

trail!

Kudos for the Wrath of Khan reference in the title of the Startopia review. It's this commitment to true geekdom that keeps my faith in CGW alive. Intelligath

Who was the bright guy that took a twit from the mailroom made him "technical editor," and allowed him to have a column? Steve

Dear editors of Crappy Geekv Witeen (that's what it stands for right?)....

Ryan Kelly

Madsen

Keep up the good work guys (and gals)! **Brenden Nelson**

Yeah, that's a nice "ilfe goal" there, Brenden. Very ambitious. Can we talk to your father a sec?

Anarchy Online: Did We Go Too Easy On Em?

I have been subscribing to CGW for about seven years now. Hove the magazine and count on you guys to guide me on what games to spend my gaming dollars, and more important, my limited gaming time on, If you say a game blows chunks, I don't go near It. (have jumped the gun in the past and bought games before reading your reviews and have been sorry-most recently with Star Trek: New Worlds.

Having said that, I was disappointed to read the "review" of Anarchy Online by Thomas McDona d [November 2001] This article read more like a "just hand In there with us, guys, we'll get it fixed" propaganda Item from Funcom, Granted, facts were presented and a balanced list of the game's good and bad points was evident, However, I got the feeling that . was reading an op/ed piece as opposed to an unbiased review. It was the fast line of the article that really got to me. McDonald writes, "When it becomes fully functional, Anarchy Online will be the MMORPG by which others will be measured." Anyone or anything can be great if they fully realize their potential. It is the act of actually fully realizing. said potential that makes someone or something great.

Bottom line. I just hope that you guys stay away from wanting a game to be something it is not, and instead let us know what it REALLY is, I depend on you guys. You let me down. Don't do it again or I'd have to come down to the offices. and spank Jeff Green in front of the entire CGW staff!! 'Nuff said

> Love. Jeff Taylor

AO may be a great game in theory, but so was the idea that the sun rotated around the Earth, It didn't work out wellin the end, but in theory it was really nice and pretty.

You must have been paid to write that review. I don't understand how you even got the game to run long enough to get a real review out of it, it had to be a bribe-that is the only way to justify that review, or else a band of supertrained ninja monkeys took over the magazine and let the review on through

Whichever it was, I am ashamed of you all. I thought that, even though your magazine is a gaming magazine, you were still required to deliver the truth Do you know the truth? YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH!! (Or at least

not in this review.) In closing, just two words come to mind. for shame!

Aesorian the Aristocrat

Pool of Extrement

Lam an RPG freak on both console and PC (but I don't like Diablo). Anyway, I recently discovered the next Pool of Radiance game, I saw it at ebgames.com Then I got interested and went to Gamespol.com. Why was this game not in a preview or Inside Role-Playing or even freaking Hot Shots?! So far, it looks ten times better than Baldur's Gate II. I just hope your review is a full review and not one of those micro ones. All those RP gamers who are reading this just know that Pool of Radiance, Ruins of Myth Drannor is going to be one of the best looking AD&D games around.

Name lost because we're stupid

Our review is in this month's issue. Read it and find out why we avoided this game.

Games...or Girls?

Which do Loick? On one hand, I have girls, who are wonderful. On the other hand, I have computer games (like Starcraft) that I have played for years. Recently I don't find myself striving for that extra minute on Diable II. Instead when I get on my computer, I sit and chat with friends. I think about girls and try to be around them. I still find it fun to play computer games, but I am no longer obsessed. Please help mel If . could get hold of a good game, I might be able to get sucked back in. Computer games can be so much better than women because they don't get mad, if you could, please SUGGEST A GAME to get me off this girl stuff right now.

Colson

Two words for you, Colson, and you'll never think about real girls again: Alley Cats.

Blizgard Sugles

The Rune-word comba "duress" in your November (ssue [Gamer's Edge] is bull****. I wasted a lot of time and effort acquiring those runes and the best three-socket armor in the game, only to have it be a complete ****ing waste.

Last damn CGW I buy,

Rav

We got those rune combos straight from Blizzard, so blame them. We take no responsibility for the editorial content of our magazine. Just kidding, We're sorry, Ray, Please don't leave us.

We Meant to Do That

I am sorry to say that you, my friends, demigods of computer gaming, screwed up. Oh, and what a stupid mistake it was.



Leelee Sobieski Comer

Poer Jeff Green. The guy brown nosed and back-stabbed his way to the top, yet he still gets no respect fram his underlings, Jeff you. should con rom Price and William O'Neal and replace them with Leelee Sobleski. Sure, she probably couldn't edit a grocery list event If her life were depending on it, but a girl with that much mammary potential would make a great intern, to say the leaster all tail King Jeff!

Uncle Jim

We're not exactly sure what you mean by "mammary potential/" Uncle Jim, but every time we say that phrase out loud,. Scooter starts sweating and twitching. Leelee starts here next week.

In the last issue (December 2001) on page 138, on your winning trick, you have a screen shot of Diablo II: Lord of Destruction, Last time I checked, Ultima Online was not a Diablo II expansion pack. Tell Mr. Green there to let up on the beans and pistachios diet-the fumes are screwing you up

No need for any thanks, though your next Dream Machine wid suffice. And maybe the Diablo II expansion. And Blue Shift: And Baidur's Gate II and Throne of Bhaal, And an optical mouse Or just time travel to get me World of WarCraft. (I'd estimate 3D to 40 years from now.)

Keep up the good writing and the dumb mistakes.

Jaymi "AbacusTafai" Mistry

While we're happy you found this mistake, we're not so happy that you have made your demigods look bad. So no free games for you. Instead, we offer you this exciting prize: We have decided to NOT cancel your subscription!

"IF JOHN WOO WERE TO MAKE A GAME, THIS IS WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE."



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SHOOTERS BONT DOME ANY DEITER. [IT'S] YOUR TRIKET TO THE LD MOVIE YOU'VE EVER PLAYED." - PC GAMER









CREATERNO! THE KIND OF TENSION AND WOMAL WOMBUR THAT THE DEST ADD GENERATE." - COMPUTER BAMING WORLD

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RATIME: 51 BAMERSPULSE. BOM BATIMO: 584 POSCENTRAL COM RATING: 57% BAMES.TUBGWS.BOOK RATINE: 11 SHREDCO.00M RATING: 93 POSHDOTER.COM RATUME: 81 INVELCAMINE, COM RATING: 94% POCAMEWOOLD.COM BATULE: 97% AHTMEWN. COM RATING: ERIO COURT FROM COMPUTER GAMES MAGAZINE

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MATINES 35





VIOLENCE. BLOOD



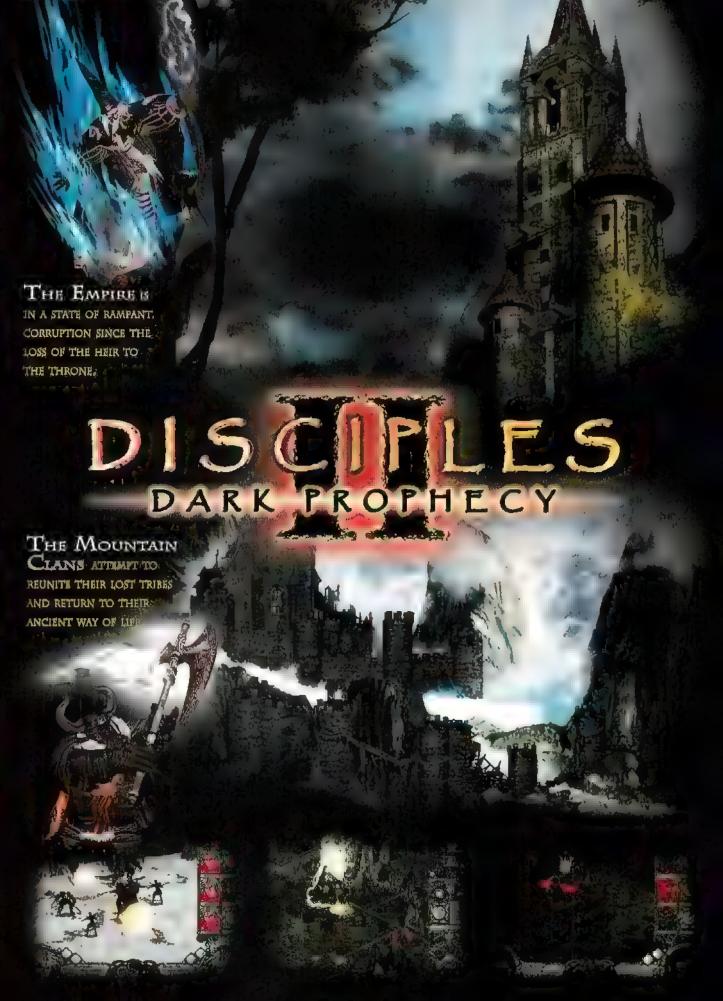
All Software's deadliest legend reunites you in an apocalyptic battle with all-consuming evil. From fierce single to multiplayer team-based modes, rage against Ritler's diabolical machine in a full-blown Fatherland graphically realised to Germanic perfection. Face your fear, Only you can deliver the world from evil or damn us all to hell







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THEIR VENGEANCE AS THE SEAL,
ON THEIR GOD'S LARTHLY
PRISON DETERIORATES.

FROM A TIME OF PEACE COMES AN AGE OF WAR

THE UNDEAD
HORDES GODDESS
REARCHIS FOR DIVINI BLOOD
TO REVIVE HER DEPARTED
SOULMATE.

COMING SOON.

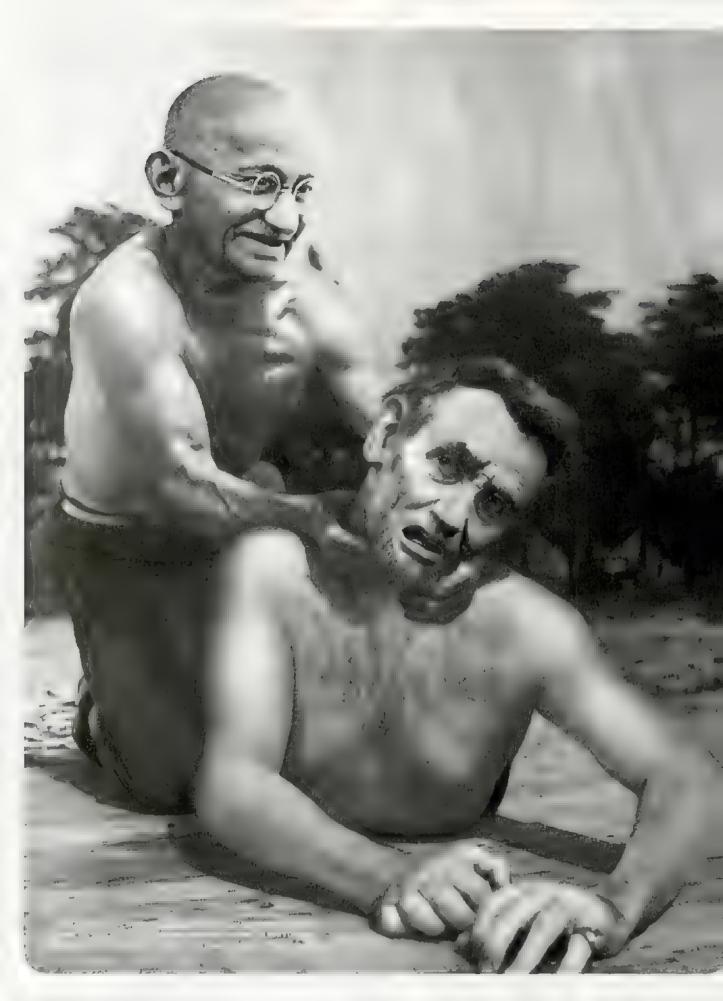




DISCIPLES



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The hottest shots of the best new games Easted by som Price

"Go from indoor environments to realistic outdoor scenes, faster than you can say, "Skaarj," Come to think of it, how so you say "Skaarj"

This Marine didn't

make it-but U2's
new skeletal animation system made his last moments pactacular indeed There are more than 15 weapons of the Familiar feel (Terran military hardware like this rocket launcher) and sew Car Smyll (exolic allengaments) like military mindClaw) variety

UNREAL

To many fanboys, there are really only two games, two 3D engines, two modes of gaming thought. We won't insult the Unreal fanboys by even mentioning that other game on the same page as this gorgeous shet of squads of Marines and Mercenaries duking it out in the glorious Unreal II. Let's just say that some gamers should be quaking in their boots right now.

26 Computer Gaming World





We love pleasant surprises.
And when Kohan: immortal.
Sovereigns worked its way
onto our playlists earlier this
year, we got just that. Now
comes another. Kohan:
Ahriman's Gift is the first
Kohan expansion; more
accurately, it's a stand-alone
prequel, but considering the
huge amount of gameplay that
it adds to the original game,
it's almost like a sequel. At
least this should tide us over
until there is one.

28 Computer Gaming World



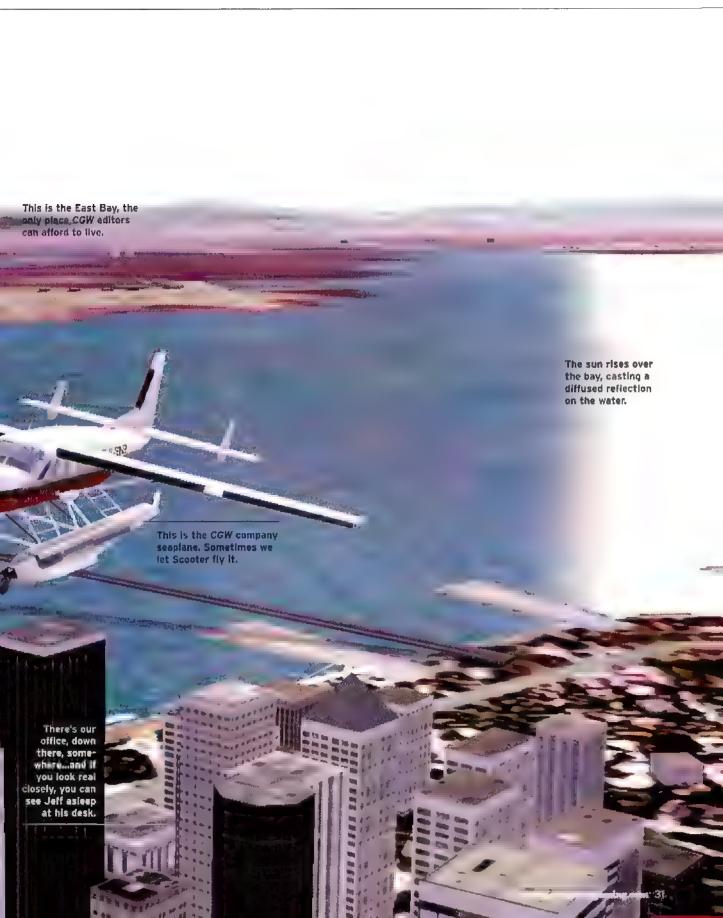


FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2002

Microsoft's Flight Simulator
zeries is one of the longest
running and most successful
franchises in all of PC gaming.
All of PC software for that
matter. Every year they make
strides in not just physics and
avionics realism, but in visual
realism as well. As you can
see, this year's model (which
went gold just before press
time) is no different. As long
as we can fly over the CGW
offices, we're happy.

30 Computer Gaming Wexlet









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Introducing Star Wars® Starfighter™ for PC.

There's nothing standard about this flight action experience. Supercharged performance. Stunning graphics. Massive galactic battles. Three flight-ready crafts. With totally immersive depth of play that thrusts you into the cockpit. And the only one left with no options—will be the Trade Federation.

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STARFIERIER







Read Me

A smorgasbord of news, opinion, and random stuff Edited by Ken Brown



Drop the linen and start the grinnin'-AvP2 is ready to burst forth By Thierry Nguyen





MOTORIN Motor City Online is far more than hot ears and cool paint. PAGE 36



FEMME FATALE Sexy heroine promises more action in No One Lives Forever 2. PAGE 37





LIL' CRITTERS This expansion to Black & White is sure to please the gods PAGE 4A



ho would turn down the chance to leap up onto someone's face and

implant an egg down their throat? No one here at CGW, that's for sure. And now everyone can implant with reckless abandon thanks to Aliens vs. Predator 2.

Right before this issue went to press we played the shipping version of the game, and so far wellke what we've seen, For starters, It runs much better than the single-player demo, which sometimes got chunky in a firefight There have been several improvements to the single-player gameplay, such as the new ability to take only as much health/ammo as you need when you run across power-ups. What seemed the most impressive though, was the Rashomon-esque nature of the singleplayer storyline. It jumps across several time periods, and many times when you're playing as a marine, you'll see a predator run off into the distance-and find yourself playing that exact predator during the predator campaign. And unake the first game, this version has enough atmosphere to give you the feeling of playing a scene in the Allens or Predator films.

Multiplayer in the shipping version also seems much better than what we exper-

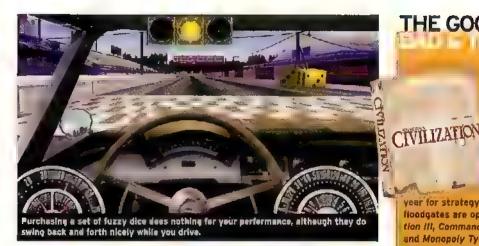


Now, getting the most frags seems more a matter of player skill than of race.

lenced in the multiplayer demo. Playing an atien in the multiplayer demo was tantamount to suicide. But after we had played a few free-for-all and team deathmatch bouts on ine, it seemed to us that the racial balance had been ironed out. Now, getting the most frags seems more a matter of player skill than of race. Many times in the office, one of our editors would proclaim, "Well, if you do so-and-so, then the

predator/marine/alien dominates!"

A few problems still show up. The single-player Al looks like it might need some tweaking; and, at least in the marine campaign, we found some questionable design decisions (the lack of marine bot A) support means the marine fights by himself through much of the campaign). But these are just our first impressions, look for a full review next month.











THE GOOD, THE

vear for strategy games. But the floodgates are opening. Civiliza-

tion III, Commandes 2, Stronghold,

and Monopoly Tycoon are all outstanding year-end releases. And Age of Mythology, MOO3, and WarCraft III are still on the horizon. Sieepiess nights again-

THE GOOD STRATEGY DONANZA

With the exception of oems like Kohan and Startopia, It's been a gulet

HANDS ON

Mana for Motorheads Revolutionary Motor City Online is far more than hot

lectronic Arts' hotly anticipated hot-rodding monster has finally made

cars and cool paint By Gord Goble

it to the starting line. Judging by its final beta test-which was smooth and hassle-free-Motor City's all-consuming automotive environment could seriously after the way many compuracers spin their wheels. It is an environment where beautifully crafted 1940s street rods meet realistically mode/ed late-'60s muscle cars. Where dirt ovals and paved speedways vie with road circuits, drag strips, and variable weather to test the meltie of its drivers. Where players scrounge the auction blocks for that one key part to restore or rebuild their trophy ride. argue endlessly the merits of a lowered Nova, and contend with ever-shifting alliances. And it's all done online, for virtual money or pink slips,

The game features a slunning variety of event parameters to keep the streets safe from fender-bashers and a complex physics model that rewards skill and punishes pedal-mashing. And while good drivers and their heavily

modified vehicles will inevitably damage or lose their equipment in high-profile showdowns, rookies can race without risk through low-level sponsored events.

Yet Motor City's true strength lies in its wonderful sense of community and expansive between-race interfaces. n which all competitors are made to feel part of a multifaceted virtual world. If EA manages to eliminate the nstances of opponent warping that hindered its otherwise compelling beta campaign, Motor City Online's \$40 sticker price will seem like bus fare to the racetrack



finallytti

So. Halo, a game we once put on our cover as one of "the five games that will change gaming," has finally gone gold-and it looks as awesome as we had predicted. Guys around the office can't stop playing it. So what's the problem? We're playing it on the Xbox, that's the problem. Freakin' Microsoft

THE UGLY POOL OF RADIANCE

Ahh, another heartwarming story of Incompetence: A highly anticipated game with a built-in drooling fanbase! The sequel to one of the best **RPGs** ever madel The first RPG with the Third Edition



D&D rules! And then...they release it in an inexcusably bugridden state. Next time you don't plan on finishing, why don't you just not start?

A place where geeks and gearheads can compete on equal terms.



Cate Archer Returns!

Sexy heroine promises more action in No One Lives Forever 2 By Ken Brown

fter stealing our hearts in last year's best action game, Cate Archer is tuning up her snowmobile and polishing her pistois for an encore. It might be hard to improve upon the original game's brilliant mix of campy spy-spoof and over-the-top shoolouts. But after selling 350,000 coples of No One Lives Forever, Monol th Studios is eager to try. They intend to raise the dar in NOLF 2 with better graphics, more varied gameplay, and more of the snappy dialogue that was such a hallmark of the original.

Monolith is playing coy concerning the details, but the game's lead designer Craig Hubbard (who also designed the original) offered a glimpse of what's instore. NOLE 2 will once again put players in the fuzzy pink slippers of a '60s superspy, but the sequel may take some aborties. Hubbard says, "We're trying to create a game in the spirit of NOLE."

rather than its literal image. We want to build on the things we enjoyed about the first game without being we glied down by its shortcomings."

In H.A.R.M.'s Way

Cate will again battle the evil forces of H A R.M., which will take her to a variety of exotic locales including Japan, India, and Akron, Ohio. The gameworld and everything in it will boast significantly higher polygon counts and improved performance, thanks to a new version of the rendering engine known as LithTech Jupiter. The world will also be more interactive, allowing you to bump, activate, or destroy many features of the environment.

The designers are placing more emphasis on accommodating different playing styles this time around. Their aim, Hubbard says, is to create relatively open environments and fill them with possibilities, leaving it to players to decide how to accomplish their goals

Sound will play a key role. All characters will be able to hear everything that the player can hear. So, for example, reloading a weapon, opening a door, or knocking over an empty bottle may arouse suspicion. If you're not careful, you might accidentally startle roosting nigeons, bringing a nearby guard to investigate.

Sometimes you can use this to your advantage, by getting a bad guy to eave his post so you can sneak by.

We'll bring you more details (without giving away the best surprises) as the game nears its holiday 2002 release Are you ready to slip back into the leopard-skin skirt of a '60s superspy?

www.computergaming.com 37

The Blood Pledge Solvential States Solvential Sta

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Claim a castle as your own through fierce battle But are you strong enough to defend it



Uso the power of magicato aid your friends or destroy your enemies

Lord British Is Back

In November and December, gaming's legendary Lord British will enter the world of Lineage to assist Blood Pledges in the ongoing battle to protect the castle thrones of Lineage from those who would bring harm to the land. Create your account with the Lineage CD enclosed with this magazine and bring your guildmates to join forces with Lord British as he makes his triumphant return to the world of gaming

> You can also download the entire free version of Lineage here, http://www.lineage-us.com





BetterQuest

Dark Age of Camelot outclasses EverQuest at its own game By Mark Asher

Dark Age probably head the smoothest launch yet of any massively multiplayer 1111112

ow! If the initial fun of Dark Age of Camelot holds up over the long haul, there will be a new contender for the crown of king of the mass vely mult player RPGs,

For starters, Dark Age had perhaps the smoothest launch yel of any massively multiplayer online game. Certainly, it was the best taunch since Asheron's Call. That's we come news for the massively multiplayer deare since the recent horrendous launches of Anarchy Online and World War II Online probably left fans wondering if their money was wosted. The creators of Dark Age, Mythic Entertainment rewarded gamers with a taunch that was virtually problem-free

There were a few hiccups involving rag time and a few patches, but Mythic soon solved the problems and has been ou ck to respond to prayer suggestions.

The biggest problem for players was finding a copy of the game. Dark Age. sold out everywhere and has been the fastest-selling game of its type to date, according to Mythic Copies were selling above cost on eBay almost immediately. and within two weeks of the launch Mythic had more than 92,000 players sign up for accounts. They've since distributed another 75,000 copies, and the company says the game is still selling well

So what are our initial impressions? It's hard to stop playing it to write this The game is flat-out lun if you like this kind of gaming experience, it's similar to EverQuest in many ways. You pick a character class and run around and kill monsters, dain experience points and ool, and go up in levels. It's a level treadmil, but an entertaining one

Where Dark Age really seems to shine is In the details. As one player told us duting an in-game chat, "It's like they had a list of things that players didn't like in EverQuest and fixed them.' One of the biggest complaints about EverQuest was that players have too much downtime (time spent resting to regain health and mana); downtime is almost nonexistent in Dark Age, Players also complained about some classes not being able to solo (survive without joining a group); in Dark Age, classes are better able to fight on their own. Players complained about losing items due to death in EverQuest: this doesn't happen in Dark Age-you lose only experience points.

if Mythic can continue to add content and support the game, well-look out. EverQuest, Dark Age of Camelot may incleed snatch that crown

Army Funds Now PC and Video Gamus

The U.S. Army has agreed to provide financial support and technical advice for two new military simulations. When the games are complete, they will likely raise the previously sidiculous notion that gamers could be well suited to become the next generation of military field commanders.



The video game, entitled C-Force, will put players in the role of squad leaders. C-Force will be developed by a partnership between Sony Pictures ImageWorks and Pandemic Studios. The other game, CS-12. will let PC players take on the role of a company commander. This game is being developed by Quicksilver Software, the company behind Master of Orlon III. Both games will come in two versions: a commercially available shrinkweapped version and a version that will be sent to the Army.

The Institute for Creative Technologies is closely involved with both projects. An organization that draws from the U.S. Army, Hollywood, and the University of Southern California, ICT designs advanced virtual reality and simulation training systems for the military.

CHECK

Reality Check compares various media ratings with those of Game-Rankings.com, which averages the ratings of all published reviews for a given title.

GAME	COW	PC Same	CEM	Camespet	1611	Same Rankings.com
Commandos 2	8+	B+	٠	A-	· A	A
Independence War 2	A	B+	B-	A-	B+	A-
Medden NFL 2002	6-	B	С	C+	B-	В
NHC 2002	B+	8+	1 *	A	A	A
Ridis Acrobia America	.6	8	*	В	*	В
Red Faction	C	A-		В	Α-	В

Retribution begins. Spring 2002.





NEW RELEASES

Bundle-licious

With the holidays approaching, game publishers are piling on the special releases

From hunting bad guys in Rogue Spear and SWAT 3 to unleashing wholesale destruction in Diablo II, this list offers plenty of ways to avoid your family this holiday season. The original versions of these games were all excellent, but these special editions add loads of new features and content that make them even more worthy. If you don't have one of the originals, get the special edition.



Diablo Battleckest \$50

If you are one of the oddball loons who has not succumbed to the addictive madness of Diablo, you won't get a better opportunity than this to indulge. Here you get Diablo II, Diablo II; Lord of Destruction, the original Diablo, and a BradyGames strategy guide, all for a measily \$50. Kill monsters, level up, repeat until your family hates you.



Operation Flashpoint Gold Edition \$40

This new pack comes equipped with the falest version of the full game; new vehicles, weapons, and missions; and enhanced multiplayer features. It also includes Red Hammer, a 20-mission add-on that lets players light a Soviet campaign. With a new central character, Dmitri Lukin, and fresh cut scenes, Red Hammer is a Flashpoint must-have



SWAT 3 Tactical GOTY Edition \$30

While rook as will benefit from the new tactics CD, veterans will revel in the other good as: more than a dozen new missions, 10-player support, custom careers, new multiplayer options, and more-all in addition to the original game. An outstanding enhancement of an excellent name



Quake III Gold Edition, Ultimate Quake, and Doom Collector's Edition

Just add Nazis, and you'd have every of shooter ever made. Gold Edition is a hybrid Mac/PC disc with O3A and O3TA, Ultimate Quake gives you all three Quake games, and Doom Collector's Edition packs in Doom Land II and Final Doom all all once.



Myth II: Worlds \$30

This hefty brick of real-time factical fantasy includes Mythill Soulblighter and its official strategy guide, loads of user-created mods including the very popular World War II: Titans, the feuda-Japan-Themed Bushido: Way of the Warrior, and the incredibly amb trous The Seventh God (see Homebrew on page 44).



Totally Unreal \$20

Haven't had a chance to ride a tactical nuke yet? Here you go. In addition to Unreal Tournament and some mods, gamers also get Unreal Gold and a teasor disc with images and trailers for Unreal II and Unreal Championship. A good primer before the mighty Unreal II arrives.



No One Lives Forever: Game of the Year Edition \$30

In case Cate Archer's British accent and skin-tight clothing weren't enough for you before, this special edition includes four new levels. of moronic benchmen, a music CD of swinging '60s tunes, a strategy guide, and map editor. The new levels aren't up to the same quality as before, but just playing with Cate again was enough for us.



Rainbow Six Collector's Edition \$70

This box has everything but a sniper rifle: two award winning tactical simulation benchmarks, Rainbow Six and Roque Spear; an essential add on (Urban Operations); a training disc from special forces experts, interviews with Tom Clancy and real covert operatives; and a strategy guide. The ultimate counterterrorist collection.



Fallout Tactics

hije i still believe that elves are pathetic, thanks to Fallour Pactics I'm willing to revise my previous opinion of role-playing games. They're not so bad, as long as they don't have elves. Well, except Fallout Tactics len't an RPG

Follout Tactics is a strategy game But the things that make it good are the things you'd expect to lose when converting an RPG to the strategy genre. Normally, I'm all for cleaning role playing out of whatever it's managed to weasel into, but now I'm starting to have doubts, which scares me

People go on and on about how no computer game can simulate a penand-paper role-playing experience

But what computer RPGs do manage to do is cramstrategy into where the rola-playing should be. Or is i'm definitely not the guy to talk to about that

People associate role-playing with a story told through dialog boxes, no matter how much strategy there is in the game etherwise. But that story eften just disguises the devices the designers use to incorporate strategic decision-making. The only difference in Fallout Tactics is that you don't have to click through pages of talk-boxes.

The first Beldur's Gate wasn't much of a role-playing game. But it was one of the best strategy games of 1998, and how. Even standard RPG elements like talking to NPCs were just a way for you to make basic decisions like those about party compesition. Need a Cierce? You can get Dynahelr, but if you decide you don't need her enymore, you have to decide whether you can afford to lose Minsc. This may be related to the backstory, but you don't have to delve into that scariness to make some Interesting tectical decisions

Fallout Tactics strips away the devices but leaves the decision-making intact. Your decisions about skills and abilities determine how you'll play the game, and the ack of a lot of between mission

chatter doesn't make the game any less compelling, instead challenging missions, superb production values, and excellent

design of the underlying angine illustrate that games are really about doing rather than reading

There are things that distinguish an actual role playing game from a strategy game masquerading as one, such as transparent, linear story devices that don't make any sense except as game mechanics. But done well, the elements that please rola-playing fans are very likely to be the same ones that let people like me accept the game as strategy—you just have to dress them up differently. Fallout Tactics shows how unnecessary most RPG dielogue is unless, as in Planetscape, it's really part of a developed story, it's outstanding. Which I never would have expected from something based on a role-playing game.

Here comes my elf!





Jawa conthetemes con

TRESPANDE FIRMLY BELIEVETHERE IS A TIME MINDER LINES CONFICONDIVILLE

IT JUST HARPENS TO BE ANYTHME AND ANYPLACE









With Chris Berman, and from Jackson calling eveny down, you're night in the middle of a live ESPN telegost. With the ability to make trades, what tookies and eigh free agents you control the action on and loff the neld. And with the cower to create autirely new players, you're a vertiable professionalli Frankenstein. So packed to ESPN NFL Pamertime in its convenient restline elot. 24 hours a day, seventies a week.











PlayStation.2











Creature Isle

This expansion to the brilliant Black & White is sure to please the gods By Tom Price



ome expansion packs are nothing more than a slew of new Items, units, and

weapons; you unlock them one by one, watch their new effects, and never bother with them again. Others just collect a li the bug patches since the game's release into one \$20 CD-ROM. But some expansion packs actually live up to their name by expanding the gameworld through new storylines, new worlds, and new gameplay, Black & White: Creature Isle can count itself among the latter

Creature Isle picks up the story of our I tile boutbuilder friends from the first land in B&W, as they crash on a remote island. The people of this island, while similar to the tribes in the Orst game, are not influenced by a god such as yourse'f. But they are quite familiar with the creatures, considering that their island is overrunwith them. Your boatbuilder buddles decide to summon you through a portal and the next thing you know, you and your preex sting creature land on this new isle.

There are no other gods to compete with, so you'll spend less time lighting for influence. You still have to do the same things for your villagers like help them grow food and get them to worship you but the game focuses much more on your creature. The creatures who inhabit the isle have lost their gods but have banded together in the Brotherhood of Creatures to maintain their collective strength. They are led by a brave hon named Rufus. Your main job is to earn alplace for your creature in the brotherhood by completing challenges the creatures give you

The challenges 24 in all, are essent ally a series of minigames including:

Bowling-defeat a cow using boulders on a large-scale lane.

Soccer-score some goals in the game those crazy Europeans call "football."

Foot Race-you have to beat a turtle around a marked course on the is and. Sound easy? He cheats

Whack-a-Villager-like whack-a-mole, but with people.

Sparring-there is a dojo where two creatures can square off and fight at any time without consequences.

The most intriguing of all may be the Tyke challenge. Tyke is a creature-a chick, to be exact that your creature must nurture and raise throughout the game, but only after you've hatched Tyke from his egg, a big challenge in itself

Creature Isle should enrich the B&W experience, while adding more replay. Watch for it sometime before Christmas.

Creature Isle offers new storylines, new worlds, and new gameplay.



A History Bridge Str. To I and Bales

Mods for BGII, Diablo II. Myth II

ust when you've proposity played these games and death, the love gods that are the med realize of the Zist conture have given your fantaxy gaming new little



Derioses Diablo II: Lord of D www.planetdieble.com

Darkness Weaves is like Dissignifulers the Real World. This Irenman mod from Rexxi.aww.dispenses with tewn portal parolls, doesn't let you repair weapons, and eliminates merchants. Were a shiny new swerd on a healing pation? Start hacking your way through hordes of beefed-up baddles and hom they drep something useful. The fact that items are liways destined to break adds an immense challenge, as players must juggle possessions often and pave powerful items for use an particularly masty lead



The Deskust Day for Saldur's Gate II: Electronis of American Markennis and American

This are painting a transport empitious RMG man ev

reversible and second testing the second sec to BGII: 50A, along with nearly 200 new Items, a similar number of new spells/and dozens of new creatures You'll have access to pewerful magistand/upgraded versions of familiar spells like Monster Summoning 🗤 The 75 new character kits are what really make this me Interesting, Fighters alone sein access to mere than 20 litts like Vampire Hunter, Pit Fighter, and Drow Bettle Monger, it adds up to a messive download, but the ideas than plans throffer CDs with the mod for a meridial



The Seventh God for Myth II www.theseventhquare.

a staggering amounts went into this project. the result is a 200MB

nowilload packed with an engineous solo campaign, tons of new units, and a nice stary inertal athrough cutscenes and voice overs

Familiar, units are augmented with new troops. The goverjuys (Four Kingdoms) have access to Eiven Archers and Dwerven Axes, among others, The had guys (Gobiln Empire) get powerful apelicasters (We Disciples of the Seventh God and hordes of Helot Slaves, and there are new neutral enemies like dragons and trells. Table incompatible with the popular Jinn mod weather commercial Green Berets software, and you must have the patch for various I.3. The banewidth orbiteneed an put TSG amount of the Myth II. Worlds collection.

















VIOLENCE



HANDHELDS

Cellular Assassins

New Swedish game
BotFighters turns cell phone
users into virtual hit men
By Sandy Brundage

"I typed
"Fire
Highlander"
and hit. A
few more
shots, and
he exploded
in a cloud
of blue
sparks. I got
off the bus
at a run."

46 Computer Gaming World



s if the real world weren't scary enough lately, it's Alive is trying to make you

even jumpler. The Swedish company has masterminded BotFighters, the first location based mobile game, Twenty four hours a day, that cell phone in your pocket makes you a walking target. "We have a lot of car chases, people racing around neighborhoods on bicycles." says Sven Hålling of It's Alive. With the cell phone serving as weapon and rader, the lines between games and reality almost disappear.

"I was riding the bus to work when my cell phone beeped," a player recalled. 'Pulling it out, I saw an SMS message Radar alerti Tracking signal detected 2500m east.' Someone was hunting medown. If they were using a laser rille with a range of 1600m, but the bus rolled on, oblivious to my perf."

Another message arrived heartbeats later: "'Radar warning: Strong tracking signal 1800m east.' The enemy had locked on.' Time to shoot the messenger But first, some counter-Intelligence action, thanks to a defliy typed "Scan," which shilled



out the assass n "Highlander's" loca tion. Highlander was hiding only 1500 meters to the east.

"I typed 'Fire Highlander' and hit. A few more shots, and he exploded in a cloud of blue sparks, I got off the bus at a run because who knew how long it would take Highlander to get back in the game."

BotEighters launched last March in Sweden, Since then, almost 3,000 killers have signed on to play for \$5 to \$10 a month on top of their regular wireless bill. There's also a small fee per text message sent. A few players have spent more than \$2,000 waging war on street corners. Each victory earns Robucks—the game's internal currency—good for apprading your blasters, shields, or laser guns via the game's Website. The site also functions as a guild hall, players chat, sign assassination contracts, and spy on the real-time positions of the renemies. The game mobilizes in the United States in a low months.





The Haytime Online Racing Community.

The Ultimate Internet Racing and



HYHI









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America Online Kayword: Motor Lity Online



eagames.com



M. J. Alital Abs The content or this game may change the to interactive exchange



New Life for Lord British and *Lineage*

Ultima creator teams up with NC Soft to bring Korean online game to America By Mark Asher

ord British is back! As nart of the North American relaunch of the popular Korean online RPG Lineage, Lord British is returning as an in-game character to lay siege to the castle of the pretender kings! Better yet, Lord British will be played by none other than Richard Garr ott during a monthlong series of events that will take place only on North American servers.

"I am personally inviting all the powerfol duilds of Ultima, EverQuest, and any other lands to come join us in Lineage," Garriott told us. "I as Lord British, Starr Long (the director of Ultima Online who played Blackthorn), and many others who built the lands of Britannia as well as many of the creators of the other lands. will be here, too, for a month long event." Garriott's company was purchased by NC Soft, and now he's working on Lineage as well as a next generation game for the Korean company.

Lineage has 2.7 million subscribers in Asia, but it launched in the U.S. earlier in the year with Lttle fanfare and didn t really take off. For the relaunch, NC SoftAustin's Manager of Community Services Susan Kath says that the game has undergone some dramatic changes

"We've added and expanded areas, added a training area for new players, and revemped the interface to make the giving more familiar to U.S. gamers," she says.

The events will play out during December as a new castle is introduced and one blood-pledge will attempt to win out and claim the cast e as their own. In Lineage, players form groups cailed blood-pledges and try to gain and hold the castles, it's team-versus team warfare, though at the lower levels it plays like an online Diublo, according to NC Soft's David Swofford.

Other changes include pledge housing, which can be purchased and used as a base, the introduction of new arcus, including one that's underwater, and some whopping big dragons that require multiple groups of players to bring down

So check out the free copy of Lineage included with this issue and play along side a gaming legend, Lord British, rate of Brittania, now looking for new lands

"We've revamped the interface to make the game more familiar to U.S. gamers."



Love and Hunger

Mopelessly Devoted to You

Ultime Online turned four years eld this month. People are still playing it. What makes people stick with outdates graphics and an aging game engine? According to Jonathan "Calandry!!" Hanna of Electronic Arts, "[Urtime Online) still offers the deepest experience in online gaming." As for the persistent nature of the players this persistent world, "When people feel they are a partie connething special, they tend to stick with kit

Ultime Online players try to copewith troublesome times.

Asparently se. The Realm, an online game rushes to preduction just before UO. has survived for nearly Tive years. More like on interactive slide show than an online world, 724 Acotor to acid nepulated with an nyld player base it is tempting to mirk at fans of these games when

mare recent entries into the entire jambores sport 30s accelerated graphics and fully detailed polygonal worlds. But at least they can point at their meniters undidare its not to an dezgled



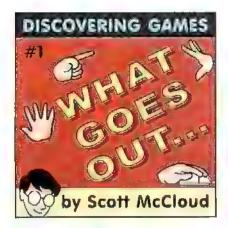
Though it's tremendously outdated, some people still enjoy The Realm. This may wall be all of them.

Cover Your Asset

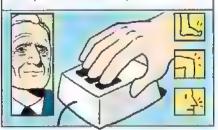
After many a positive beta report, mythic entertain. ment's Dark Age of Camelot has been released to a public starving for an online game that deexit strain you onto a leveling treadmills

interestingly, Mythic has opticate alsobe the ability o multi-task with other applications while playing DAOC, According to Mythic, this is done to prevent the use of third-party cheat utilities and to curtail extrasurricular discussions among players that might sarrie to undermine the carefully balanced game of Capture the Artifacts that exists fer players of higher level. the meantime, the honest guy has to wonder if he's seing hacked while playing, given that his personal firewall software will not be running while he is playing the game. But by the time you rece this, there should ee a fix for this posted to the support Website

DTTMcCLOU

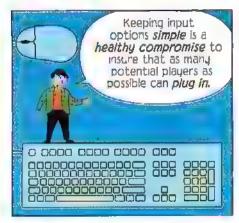


Some of the very first mice, invented in 1964 by Doug Engelbart, had three or even five buttons. Doug knew the human body could get a lot done at once and also considered foot. knee, and even nose input devices!

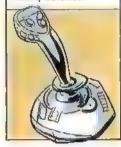


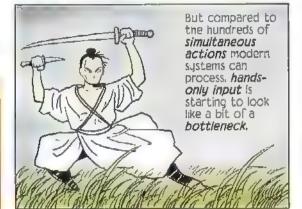
But in the long run, our hands' incredible versatility was harnessed mostly for writing and occasionally clicking, when not stuffing Doritos into our otherwise motionless bodies.





And more elaborate input devices aiready use more of our hands' many talents.







It may be a while before the full immersion popularized by mid-90s Hollywood hits the market, but whatever parts of your body output force, you can bet there'll be a wau to input it as well.

In short: What goes out will go in.

And if improved voice recognition and voice over net make tuping redundant, look for your hands to play a far more complex role as well.



Force feedback devices already provide bumpy steering wheels and joysticks, but the real-time manipulation of 3D objects is where things get interesting --







I've played with some prototypes and believe me, there's nothing like the feeling you get from pushing thin air.



It'll probably take *longer* than we want for such toys to *hit the market*, but at least that'll give us time to enjoy our lives outside of games -- before those games suck us in forever!









Wookiee Watching

What it's like to be a walking carpet in Star Wars Galaxies By Ken Brown

Despite male and female genders, don't count on any Wookiee mooky.

ho doesn't love the hairy peasts known as Woowees? Exemplified by our pal Chewbacca, Wooklees are tall, powerful humanoids with legendary tempers. What can a player expect out of their Wookiee hero in Star Wars Galaxies? Well, no Wookiee nooky unfortunately (although there will be both male and female genders). But there are other things you can do with these burly bipeds.

- · Wooklees will be stronger than most other species, and will therefore excel as warriors and explorers
- At 2.3 meters in height, Wookiees are the taliest of the eight playable species in the game, They tower over the 1.4meter Bothans, the smallest species
- . Wookies are the only species that can build and repair the bowcaster, the traditional Wookiee weapon that Chewbacca carries throug rout the ong nat trilogy. Bowcaster specific skills will be reserved for Wookiee characters.
- . Wooklees are also proficient with the ryyx blade, a hand-to-hand weapon unique to Wook ee culture. As with bowcasters, cyck blade skills will be finited to Wooloees
- In the Star Wars universe, Basic is the most common language in the galaxy. Wookiees can understand Basic and many other languages, but their unique vocal chords prevent them from speaking anything but Shyri wook, the Wook ee native tongue, Wooklees will

therefore need to rely on emotes. gestures, postures, and protocol droads for communicating with other players. who don't understand Shyrawook. Like other languages, Shryllwook will be available for players to learn ·Players can choose from both male and

- female Wookiee characters, both with customization options for facial features, hair color and patterns, and hairsty es.
- . Wook ees don't like the rept han Trandoshans (another playable species in Galaxies), who have a bad habit of using Wookiees for slaves. As a result, Wookiee characters may encounter hostile Trandoshan NPCs and have a difficult time dealing with Trandoshan vendors.

ler Poinderter, step mean from the computer



Some of us at CGW have actually experienced the act of love, but some of us still just download it, The worden is in and CEN gives real sex five stars, so de yourselves a favor and get a date. Or DSL. They're both pretty good.



Opens December 19. We're excited airight, but we're trying to, keep our expectations low. As long as this movie validates every moment of our entire lives up to this point, we'll feel we've gotten our \$8.50 worth.



David Sedaris offers up six hiterlous tales of Yuletide darkness. "The SantaLand Diories" is a tour de force detailing his stint : as a Christmes off at Macy's. Who can resist the charms of "Dinah, The Christmas Whore"?



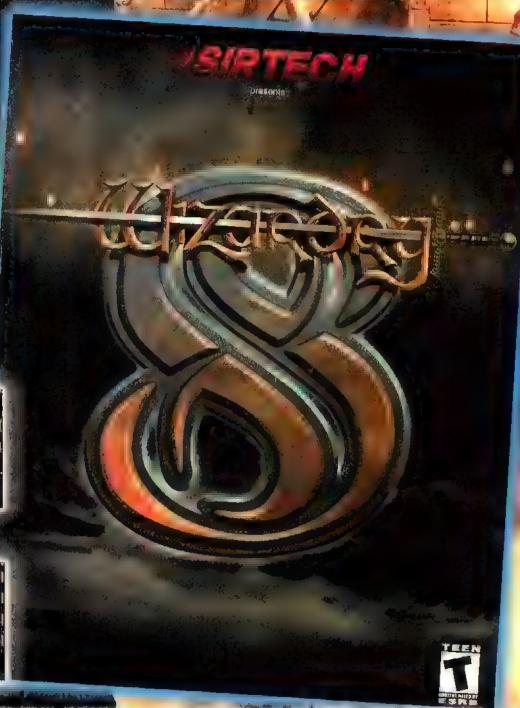
CGW editors are sick of hearing [™]Lifetime" blare out of Wil's office, but they can't deny that this album is the bomb. What's not to like about Maxwelf? He's black, he has cool hair, and the ladies love him. Remind you of someone?

A New Wizardry for a New Generation

- Explore a vast 3D world filled with action, magic, and adventure.
- Choose a custom personality for each character and hear them speak over 100 lines of dialogue.
- Battle over 300 types: of monsters in some of the most intense combat eyer seen in a RPG.
- * Advanced creature A.I. brings a new level of realism to RPGs









it's not cynical, uncreative design if buggy \$15 product makes money



Tycoon Typhoon

Could these be the next big Tycoon games you see at **Wal-Mart?** By Robert Coffey

ith the success of tycoon games like Roller Coaster Tycoon and Railroad Tycoon

II, publishers are chasing the wave with a rash of bizarre new titles. Among them: Car Tycoon, Skale Park Tycoon, Airline Tycoon, Ski Resort Tycoon, Oil Tycoon, and even Fast Food Tycoon

If there's a market for such a thing as 'Fast Food Tycoon," can the following lycoon littes be far behind? Spot the real game in this list of bodus ones for a chance to win a special sampler of piotic tycoon games! (Send your emailto cgwietters@ziffdavis.com.)

Beanie Baby Tycoon

Blow vast sums of money on eBay as you scoop up Blackie the Bear, Early the Robin, Wiggly the Octobus, and every

cute goddamn one of them no matter what your hosband says. Finally, a game that speaks to the lonely, 400-pound woman in sweatpants lurking in us all.

Celebrity Lamprey Tycoon

What would you do for that 16th minute of Tame? In Celebrity Lamprey Tycoon you need to assemble a stable of figures living in the shadow of true stars and get them campy cameo work, the occas onal commercial, and the odd Playboy spread, Kato Kaelin, Darva Conner, doomed publicity whore LaToya Jackson, and more are fast dimming stars in this game's universe.

Paparazzi Tycoon

It's not stalking if you're paid to do it! That's the rativing cry for this callously intrusive photographer sim. Control an army of evil shulterbugs using Hubble Telescope caliber lenses to snap toplesssunbathing photos of Jennifer Love

Hewitt and goad Julia Roberts into a fistfight for an extra lat check

Tycoon Tycoon

It's not cynical, uncreative game design if your buggy, pedestrian, \$15 product makes money! Instead of deing burned onto a CD-ROM, Tycoon. Tycoon expands the traditional rearm of gaming by delivering to your door a morally bankrupt Marketing Manager, a whiteboard reading "

Tycoon!," and a high-school programmer willing to work for Donitos, D&D Jagures. and a signed photo of Tia Carrere.

Moon Tycoon

It's on the moon! You're a tycoon! Moon Tycooni Say it-it's fun Moon Tycoon! How can it possibly fail?

Wayans Brothers Tyggon

Do you have what it takes to keep every marginally talented Wayans brother gainfully employed? Play the Jamie Foxx card and get Keenan a mercy part in a moviel Keep Damon out of the way with a job at Orange Julius while you faunch. yet another series on the WB! Deal with the scintillating challenges presented by exclusive new Wayans clan members. the diminutive Theodore Roosevell Filzsimmons Wayans and the stuttering albino Pinky Onyx Wayans! Whatever you do, don't get them well and don't feed them after midnight.

Freak Show Tycoon

Make your own hideous aberrations of nature and taxe them on the road. displaying them in parking lots, at county fairs, and at children's birthday parties until you reach the pinnacle of success-a command performance for England's equally disfigured Royal Family

The Hair Club for Men Tycoon

You're not just a tycoon-you're a member! Design a custom line of marginally realistic harroleces for endless hordes of insecure real estate brokers. Research new materials to create the ultimate Man Wig Does the holy toupee grail lie in yak halr, deep seakelp, or a dark ritual involving three goats, the full moon, and a one-eyed, loincroth-clad dwarf named Manny?

Genital Piercing Tycoon

Oooh, it hurts so good.

Actually, no, not so good, It just hurts. t hurts really bad, it hurts really, really, really bad. And the nightmares-don't get me started on those. Bundled with a special hypoallergenic force feedback mouse designed by Nine Inch Nails.

THE SEQUEL TO THE BEST-SELLING STAR TREK RTS GAME EVER

STARTIREK ARMAIDA





Command more ship classes and 3-D formations (up to 16 ships per fleet)

so compelling single-calayer mission: give you control over Federation. Klingon and Borg forces.

Engage in intense multiplayer battles with up to six races, over LAN and Internet via Gamespy.com

Report to www.armadae.com for mission updates











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RANKINGS

CGW Top 20

Those ruthless Sims claw their way back to the top, refusing to be outdone even by the Lord of Destruction



The Sims will stop at nothing to get ahead.





They may be cate, but Lord of Destruction: Operation Flashpoint named for the effect it proves a highly compelling has on people's I ves? commercial in litary sim, Last Game Dating. The Sims **** (\$40. Electronic Arts) 2 Diable il Expansion: Lord of Destruction ***** (\$35, Vivendi Un versal) Operation Flashpoint **** (\$4), Codemasters) The Sims: House Party Expansion Pack 4 *** (\$29, Electronic Arts) Roller Coaster Tycoon *** (\$23, Infogrames) Madden NFL 2002 大大大公会 (\$35, Electronic Arts) **未未未**於 The Sims: Livin' Large Expansion Pack (\$27. Electronic Arts) *** Max Payne (\$47, GodGames) *** MS Flight Simulator 2000 (\$29. Microsoft) **** 10 1 (\$40, Vivend, Universal) *** #1 Arcaniim (\$45, Vivendi Universal) **** 12 Sim Theme Park 13 (\$19, Electronic Arts) 13 **** Age of Empires II: Age of Kings (\$35, Microsoft) 14 *** Roller Coaster Tycoon Loopy Landscapes (\$25, Infogrames) 18 A A A A S Age of Empires II: The Conquerors (\$24. Microsoft) 16 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 A ROBOTO A CA (\$19. Activis on) **** Black & White (\$41, Electronic Arts) tin Kings Quest VIII: Mask of Eternity **** \$17, Vivead Universals 慷 Half-Life: Blue Shift *** (\$29 Vivend) Universal) **** 20 Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed

For a computer quining mag-



azine, this issue sure seemed to a focus en people. Every other page seemed to feature real.

humans-actors from Jed! Knight, Christopher Lloyd in Toonstruck, wannaba SAG members dressed like drawlings for The Last Express, a quy with a hatchet in his fereneed from Harvester, and page after may at COW crowns perling uncomfortably in the same gray mock turtieneck. Thank God those FMV days are ever.

O Marza Ago, Jan. 1992



Apparently veet smounts of ether were continuously pumped into CGW a decado ngo. How else to explain the 1991.

Action Game of the Year Award going to Links, a friggin' golf game? Or a full page of fiction. by semeone called Huemac the Rune Mage? Or the oddly compelling erotic tale of Mike Ditius unfaiding across four consecutive pages of an Accelede ad with this bold text The Earth opened, she stood naked, her wet body bathed in Beverly Hills moonlight. Ditka was out to kick butt-he hated. the Austrians,"

15 Years Ago, Jan. 1987



Cinemaware's classic: Defender of the Crown was reviewed In this Issue and we even námeď a new

genre for it: interestive cinema. While that term hasn't exactly caught on, there's no denying this swashbuckling adventure/ strategy/action hybrid's held on our hearts. Fifteen years later, Cinemaware has reformed and is back to making games. Can It Came From the Desert 2 be

"We nover talk to consumers. They just f### 115 ttp." -Kelley Flock

NOTABLE QUOTE

Online Entertainment. in Edge

of Sony

Mayazine

SEPTEMBER RETAIL SALES RESULTS BY MPD INTELECT

(\$17, Electronic Arts)

THE MASS DESTRUCTIONS

CATE HE LITTER OXYMORUM

MachCommander 2. A real-time game of government well free to and law memorars. Universe, the properties of pu'll bee stronged tambles and million into more to take decorpanyles physicist filling machines through a littersweet belle of supplication process. The public bounce, you'll bring stability sack to the 31 may be a real to the same of the public bounce, you'll bring stability sack to the 31 may be a same of the public bounce.

the state of the s

MECHICOMMANDER 2



Stellnammeensem/cemakings/ings. Hesersim

Microsoft

PIPELINE

Our latest guesses about when those games are finally shipping









stimating software release dates is like snowboarding in an avalanche. These dates represent the best available into we had at press time. If you're a publisher, send your updates to: cowietters@ziffdavis.com.

HIDDEN & DANGEROUS II Petr Vochozka, designer at Illusion
Softworks, was quoted as saying that as of press time, H&DII is "close to the Alphastage." The biggest hurdle left is the Al, which can make ar break a game, no matter the genre. Even though the lead designer left the company due to creative differences, two other designers have stepped in, and everything leoks like it's on track.

CAPITALISM II Pemamuar designer Trever Chan? Last seen designing Seven Kingdoms, he's returned to the game: he's best known for, Capitalism. In addition. to the completely overhauled isometric angine, new features such as a dynamic economy, more product types, the ability to use a press, multiplayer modes, and buliding acquisitions will be making their way into this substitute-MBA program. You can also de stuff like observe your employees and customers via an interior view and build a mansion with the money you're making (assuming you're doing a good Job). You'll probably get the chance" to flex your corporate might by the time. you read this.

the competition semetime next spring, in response to complaints about the previous game, Eidos will include a Save Game function as well as the eption of switching between first- and third-person for the Xbox and PS2 varsions). Also, there will be an inventory system that allows weapons to be carried overfrom one mission to the next.

IMPOSSIBLE CREATURES Due to trademark problems, Alex Garden's bizarre Sigma has been renamed, in the tradition of wacky '80s popcorn sel-fl movie parlance, to impossible Creatures.

_		
Age of Mythology 👵	Microsoft 🚗	Spring 2002
Age of Wonders II: The Wizard's Throne	Take Two	Spring 2002
Arn Fatalls	Fishlank Interactive	January 2002
Asheron's Cull: Dark Majesty	Microsoft	December 200
Asheron's Call 2	Microsoft	Winter 2002
Black & White; Creature Islan	EA	December 2001
Demotures A Piles	Ojamu -	Summer 2005
Capitalism II	UhiSoft 200	December 2001
City of Heroes	Cryptic Studios	Fell 2002
Comanche 4	Nevalogic	Winter 2001
Combat Mission 27	Mg Time Software	Winter 2001
Commander Jill	Stardock	Spring 2002
Connect	Jeffeod:	Spring 2002
Counter-String Condition Zero	Sierra	Sering 2002
Destroyer Command	UbiSeft	Spring 2002
Deus Ex 2	Eldos	Summer 2002
Disciples At Bark Prophecy	Strategy First	January 2002,
DOOM 3 - E MOOD	id seitwere	Eventually
Drugon Empires 100	Codemasters	Spring 2002.
Dragon's Lair 30	Dive Byte	On hold
Duke Nakon Forever 30	Realms	Spring 2002
Dungsen Siege	Microsoft	Jenuary 2002
Earth & Beyond	Westwood	Winter 2001
Elder Scrells: Morrowlad	Dethesda	Summer 2002
Etherlands;	Fishtank	December 2001

Interactive

- Europa Universalis II	Strategy First	Winter 2001
Far West	JaWord ,	Spring 2002
Freedom Force	Crave	Christmes 2001
Galactic Civilizations	Stardock	Fatt 2002
Ol Combut	Freedom Games Inc.	Pabruary 2002
Global Operations	Crave	Winter 2001
Hole of the Santage	Microsoft	Spring 2002
Horses of Might # Magic IV	300	Spring 2002
Hidden & Dangerous 2	Take Two	Spring 2002
Hitmen 2: Silent Assassin/	Eldos	Spring 2002.
Hatel Tycon	Jawaod	Spring 2002
Impossible Creatures	Microsoft	Summer 2002
Industry Tycsen 2	Jeweod	Spring 2002
Lineage 2	Destination Games	Spring 2003
Imperium Galactica 3: Ganesia	COV	Spring 2002
Legends of Lock Noss	fireamcatcher	Spring 2002
Lock On: Modern Air Combat	Uhiseft	February 2002
Master of Orion til	Intogrames	Spring 2002
Medal of Honors Allied Assault	學主	March 2002
Hillian	Factor	Sammer 2002
Might & Magic 1215 Writ of Falo	300	Spring 2002
Natural Resistance	Jowaca	Spring 2002
Hentret	CON	Spring 2002
Heverwinter Nights	interplay	Winter 2001
Nexagon: The Pit	Strategy First	Spring 2002
A.R.B.	Strategy First	Nevember 200)

Ringblij	Ssey Oyuna Entertainment	Surmar 2002	
State MEN STATE	Activision	Someday	
Beathmetel	JaWood	Spring 2002	
Republic: The Revolution	Eldos	Summer 2002	
Return to Castle Welfenstein	Activision	December 2001	
Serious Sam: The Second Encounter	Take Two	December 2001	
Shedowhene A. C.	UbiSeft	Spring 2002	
Sid Meler's SimGolf	EA	Winter 2001	
Sims Online	EA THE SE	Summer 2002	
Soldier of Fortune II: Double Hellx	Activision	Spring 2002	
Sovereigh	Sony Online Entertsinment	Conceled	
Star Wars: Galaxies	LucasArts 🦟	Winter 2002	
Star Wars Jedi Outcart:	LucasArts	Sering 2002	
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic	LucasArts	Fall 2002	
Babole Research	Dostination Games	Summer 2005	
Team Fortress 2	Sierra	Spring 2003	
White the second	Eldes	Summer 2002	
Unreal II	iniogrames	Spring 2002	
WarCraft Hill	Mizzard	Series 2002	
Berderde IV	UNSET	Summer 2002	
Warierds Battlecry II	UbiSoft	March 2002	
World of Wardraw	Mazzapi	Eventually	



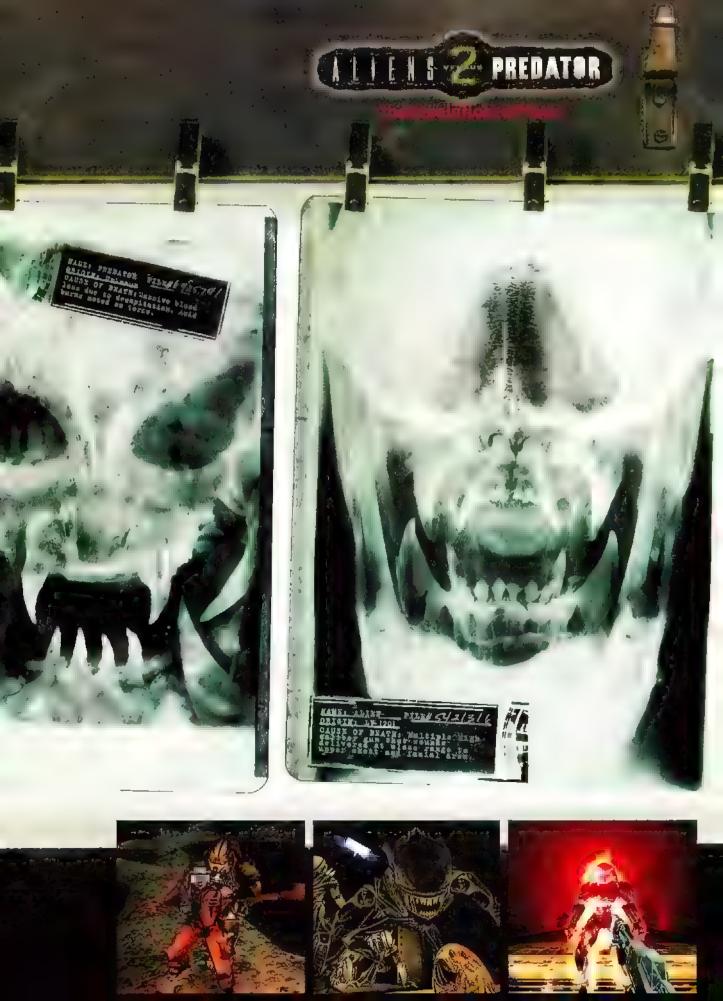
ELSF1
www.elsa.com



Aller Mediate Human Each with new weapons and capabilities in a single storyline and capabilities in a single storyline.







You mostly take your aggression out on rival gangs and the cops, but innocent people sometimes get in the way.







I don't thick this is what this guy had in mind when he said, "I want to die at hom my own bed."

The character models in Mails exhibit. finely meanted body language. The offeet is almost sroopy.



Parking parages always make a good place for a shootout.



Fin a legitimate husinessment



The entire City of Loct Heaven it rendered no matter where you are, even out in the hey-so no leading between sections.



Being chased by two dapper thugs and you got no gain. Looks pretty depoints.



Heware the lady in red.

MAFIA

Making gamers an offer they can't refuse by Tom Price

he '20s and '30s were kind" of a renaissance for the e-mafia (which, by the way, doesn't exist according to the burly man from New. Jersey standing behind me in my cubicles. Orannized crime flourished during Prohibition, and Hellywood became fascinated with the gangster Image as actors like Jimmy Cagney and Edward G. Robinson became huge movie stars. The movies of that time period, along with other more modern depictions of La Cosa Nestra, are the main inspiration behind Gzech devel oper Illusion Softworks' new thirdperson action/adventure game, Malia

In Malla, you play Toramy, a raild-mannered cab driver who gets caught up in the seedy underworld of crime when some thugs in need of a getaway carbop into his cab.

That's hew the first mission bagins, with you driving a jalopy at breakneck speeds (say, 40 miles per hour?) while your goodfalla passengers ampty their

roscoss at the pursuing cops.
It's a good way to kick off
the game, considering what an
important role cars play. Most
missions will involve hopping into
an old Model T or Pierce Arrow
(there are no real car licenses in
the game, but cars are closely
modeled after real-world antiques) to
get to a bank job or kidnapping or
other nefarlous operation. The car
mode is so extensive that a racingonly made à la Need for Speed is
incorporated into the game.

You'll need a car to get around the huge fictional city of Lost Heaven, which is about 12 square miles and is populated with pedestrians, vehicle traffic, and police, who will react even if you break the smallest of traffic laws (which, by the way, were carefully researched for historical accuracy). Lost Heaven is an amalgametion of gritty urban centers from the time period like Chicago and New York.

When you're not driving around town, you'll be creating other mischief within the game's 20-plus missions, mostly with bats and tommy guns.

Weapons are also historically accurate, so no rocket launchers. But the Moletov cocktails de pack a wallop. You'll mostly be taking your aggressions out on rival gangs and the ceps, but innocent people get in the way lonce in awhile.

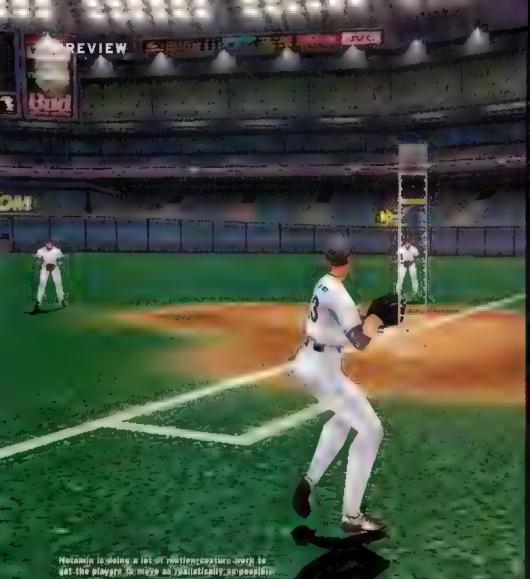
At an earlier stage of development, Mella used the same engine as Hidden & Dangerous (another illusion game) but has since moved to an original engine, called LS3D, better suited to the subject matter. The result is a game that looks like the Depression should; dark, gritty, and depressing but it's semenow beautiful.

Malia is most reminiscent of Max Payne and Hitman—the biggest difference, thankfully, is that Melia has multiplayer. If Malia can avoid Max Payne's corny story and writing while having better gameplay and control than Hitman, then it should

GAME STATS

CUM: Action
REUSE MIC O1 2002
FRIENCE Take2
DEVLORE Hilbeton
Softworks
COMMIT malia
.godgames.com













ULTIVATE BASEBALL

ONLINE

GAME STATS

CDIC Sports

REAST MR. Q3 2002'

NATURAL NATURE NOTION

Communication Corp. OMIC:

WWW.UK! matchaschallenline

.com

Who's on first? It could be you! By Rob Smolka



Each player you create will have a unique DNA malaup, which is a hidden set of attributes that define many of your players' skills and abilities,

he current phenomenon in gaming (or the once-fresh Idea that proved lucrative. and is new being cepied by everyone else) is massively multiplayer online titles. But so many of the games in development are se similar to the reigning champs (EverQuest, Ultima Online, and se on) that It's questionable whether enough of an audience can be found to support the newcomers. Netamin's upcoming Uitimate Baseball Online, though, leaks like it has a chance to carve a niche for Itself in this crewded field.

Instead of assuming the role of e warrior er wizard, yeu sijp on the spikes of a pre-baseball player. But you don't start out as Barry Bonds or Roger Clemens-you pay your dues in the emateur league to earn rank points that allow you! to advance through the minors and eventually to the big show. You'll earn these points through: accomplishments like hitting homeruns, striking out batters, and being on the winning team.

Character creation consists of choosing right- or left-handedness. and a unique look for your avatar. One item you won't have control over is DNA, which determines traits such as the pitches you can throw, switch-hitting ability, batting stance, and so on. As the design team adds features to: the game, DNA will take on an Increasingly important role.

Players wen't be limited to certain positions. While not quite realistic (other liberties taken with realism include a lack of Injuries and perfect umpires), it should help to alleviate problems.

with people net wanting to play certain positions. At first, you'll participate in pick-up games. When you say on, there will be a number of games to join, each. needing a full complement of players before it begins, Just pick an open spot; when all the positions are filled, the game will. start. So even childish players will be likely to bite the builet and play left field, knowing that they'll . have a chance to play a different position in the next came.

As for the gamepley, producer-Daniel Manachi says, "All the interfaces were designed to be simple for the new player to pick? up but with enough room for player skill to improve over time. There is a power bar for the fielding interface, and you simply? stand toward the direction/player. you'd like to throw to. The pitching interface will include a list of pitches that the player can throw and the power bar from: fielding with an added accuracy

tial in the long run, Even if you. die and have to recover your corpse, you move on with no real less. In UBO, packet less: Pay your dues in the amateur league to advance through the minors and to the big show.

portion, Betting is still in flux." Each player will have a thirdperson, over-the-shoulder view of the field. And unlike current single-player games, in which the computer decides which fielder is, active, everyone will be free to chase down pop-ups-though this. could lead to Bad News Rearstype misadventures in the field.

Players will be able to form teams and join leagues once theve: advance in rank, Prizes for the

could cost an entire game, if not a series. Reducing our packet. sizes, distributing our servers nation- and worldwide, and. combating lag will be anongoing process."

league winners are planned,

though Natamin isn't sure yet

what they will be. Also, whether: the game will include Major

League licenses is still up in the

team?names and leges to choose:

from. The stadiums, teo, though

fictional, will have a familiar look.

The cest of running a game of.

this sort can be crippling, and

licenses can eat up a lurge part'

of a budget. There's a possibility

it will happen, as the publisher:

partners, so expect to see reci-

world ads on the game's stadium':

Netamin is aware that elimin-

success. As Manachi says, "Lag-

Counter-Strike la Inconsequen-

ating isg will be key to UBO's.

in a game like EverQuest or

plans to recoup some of the

costs through advertising

biliboards, for example.

air, but there will be plenty of

A beta test is planned for Q2: 2002-by then, most of the gameplay issues will be resolved, and we should get a good idea of whether it will be worth the monthly fee. We'll update you as the launch date approaches.



Who needs the real thing when you have fictional stadiums that look, this seed?





CHECK THE STATS

Netamin may be an unlamillar name to us, but take a trip to its home country of Korea and you're cure to find a few fans. Fermerly, known as Gameworks Korea, this talented develonment team has a varied. portfolio that includes everything from developing. educational products, Internet applications, and, of course, online games to localizing games for its, home market.

Battiedragon, an enline action game the company created back in 1998. hoaste 68.000 members. Another success, especially in Taiwan where it ranks as. the third mest popular enline game in the country, is *Dragon Raja*, a massively: multiplayer role-playing game. And on your next trip to the seftware store, look for Battlesours. This enline-only action game will be semething of a testfor Natamin's servers kere in the U.S. (and the monthly fee will be a very reasonable \$6.95).



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aste

Can the granddaddy of 4X games achieve the universal domination it so desperately wants? **By Tom Chick**



4X: explore, exploit, expand, exterminate



ian Emrich is a fairly short fellow with a Napoleon Bonaparte bust on top of his monitor. Like Napoleon he has plans. Blg plans. Plans to make a game of unprecedented scope and depth. "I'd venture to say it's the most complex design ever put into a commercial gaming product. The design mandate was to put in the kitchen sink, to raise the box so high that you get a nosebleed just tenting at it!" Emilia says, A few minutes later, the hyperbole turns 180 degrees. "We give you such a deep game, you need an aqualung to get to the bottom of it," he boasts. He is: clearly fond of flashy language.

Emrich's plan for Master of Orion III is committing of a persons. He hopes to design a complex science-fiction strategy game that will be easily accessible to "tourist gamer." There's no nount that MOO3, as it's called by fans of the previous games, will be complex. The demoks mind-boggling. Each

game has room for 32 empires. Battles can include up to a dozen task forces, each of which can consist of up to 64 ships. Every planet, ship, task force, system, and army has its own leader. The galaxy consists of dozens of systems, each with up to eight plenets, each with up to five moons and an average of live regions, each of which can be developed separately to emphasize manufacturing, mining, bloharvesting, government, research, the military, or spaceport facilities. Each region has. its own papulation, onrest level unamployment rate and alvil defense. Separate tax rates can be set for each planet, system, sector, and empire. Your economy can

choice of fixed or floating-point currency.

"If you're an accountant, boy are you gonna love this gome," Emrich says, rubbing his hands together.

include deficit spending with your

Bahemoth



Here is the entire Saurian fleet. These ships look as mean as the race that pilots them. We give you such a deep game, you need an aqua hung to get to the bottom of it."









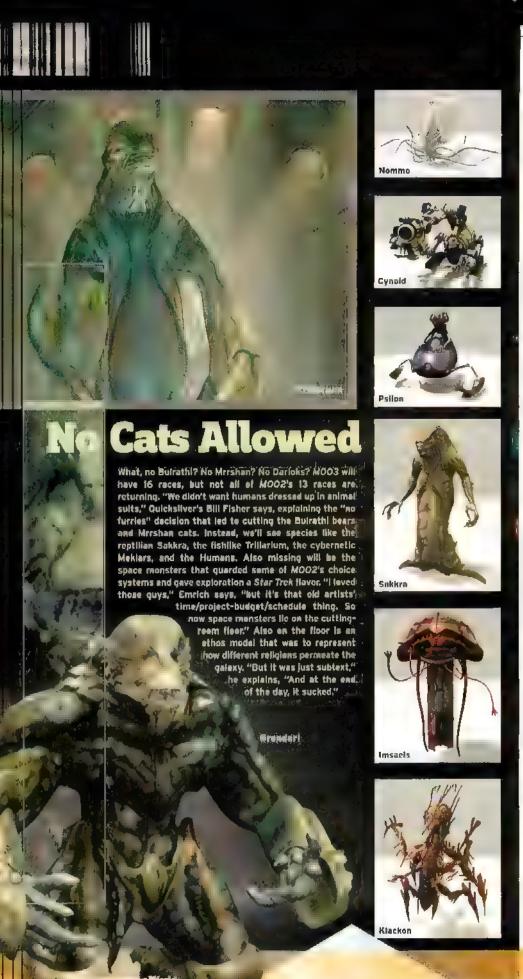




The Rass, according to their MOO rap sheet, have emerged from oppression at the hands of their brethren Saurians. The other Saurian races include the Sakkra, ferocious and reptillan-like, and the big, hulking Grandaris.

GAME STATS

GRAF, Strategy
MILLAF DAL OJ 2002
FULLAR DAL OJ 200



Calculator Optional

But most of us aren't accountants, so MOO3 is designed to essentially run Itself. "When you start your turn, all the decisions are already made. You have leaders everywhere who have Implemented your plans, So when vou see your Situation Report, crises have already been handled. Now they're handled based on the leaders' races, their personauties, who their bosses are, their character traits. But none of these guys know how to win the game, It's a SimGalaxy running underneath the hood. If you do nothing and just hit Done, Done, Done, then your civilization will slouch toward Comorrah and you will lose the game. What you need to do is be the man with the plan and steer the great ship of state toward your vision of what it needs to be. All you have to do is whatever you feel is the most fun way to win the name."

For example, you don't have to choose planets for colonization. Each planet has a push and pull factor. which is determined automatically. The push factor represents how badly people want to leave, A planet with a harsh government, a high tax rate, a crowded population, and an Inhospitable climate will have a high push factor. The pull factor, on the other hand, represents how badly people want to arrive. A planet with lots of freedom, low taxes, plenty of room, and a pleasant environment will have a high pull factor. For each turn, the game will shuffle population according to the push and pull factors, with no input from the player, No more micromanaging colony ships and population points.

Unless you want to, of course-and this is the point of MOO3's ambitious design. The player can tell colonies where to go. They can also tinker with a planet to tweak its push and pull factors. They can provide financial incentives to encourage migration. In other words, all the complicated stuff will run itself, but you can get involved if you want.

Learning to Delegate

This is the paradigm that drives Emrich's design. The Al is built around the leaders, each of whom represents an Al subroutine with a series of tasks it wants to accomplish You can either sit back and watch or dive in and override. At the beginning of every turn, you receive a certain number of Imperial Focus Points that represent government control. The more centralized your government is, the more points you'll get. For each point you spend, you can dip your



You're the Black Knight and you've got better things to do. Like lead an infernous legion of rogue mercenaries into bettle, trade weapons on the black market, even fight for the ruthless House Steiner. All while piloting the most badess 'Mecha event Welcome to the darker side of MechWarriog.. Black Knight Where it's good to be bed.



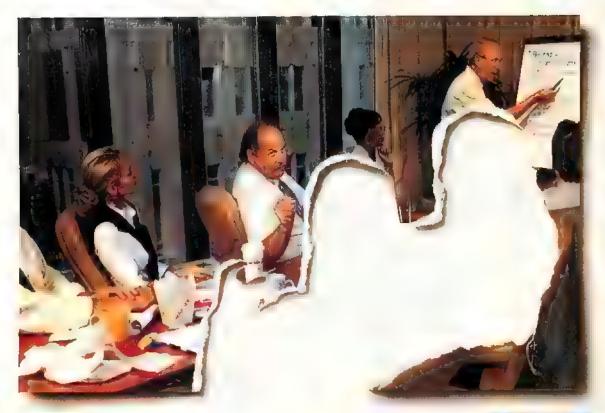






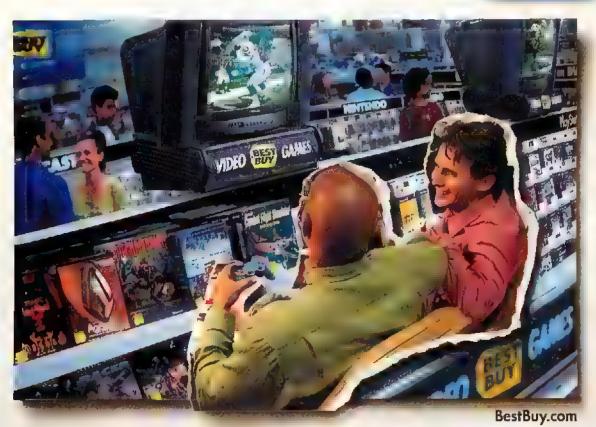
Microsoft:





If you need to escape the daily grind, come to Best Buy. You'll find tons of games and you can play all you want. Which beats working through lunch







you'll pay," says Emrich. "It's

Then there are MOOB's

tactical battles, which play:

only fair."

Since Want

Combat in MOO3 is locked at a higher level of interaction. When you build ships, they go into your reserves. You can then draw from your reserves to build task forces, which Emrich calls "custom chess pieces," Battles are automatically resolved unless you spend IFPs to take direct control, in which case vou'il play a real-time battle. Planets, asteroid belts, moons, and dark matter will be the equivalent of terrain. You maneuver your task forces, but each ship's leader fires weapons, uses special devices, or flees if his morale breaks. The basic concept resembles that of Time Gate's innovative Kohan

The combat engine uses voxels to allow zooming in for close-ups or pulling back for a strategic overview. Because Quicksilver isn't using polygons, curved surfaces are much easier to achieve for planets and bulbous ships. Each of the game's eight species has 14 unique ship models that should make them easy to identify even from a distance. "One of my pet peeves in science liction is that it looks like everyone uses the same shipyards," says Art Director Rantz Hossley, He shows off MOO3's Icthytosian ships that look like something from Jules Verne or Leonardo da Vinci. The Cybernetik ships have modular designs that make them look like Tinker Toys. The Saurian ships are all sharp, squat angles, while the Etherian ships have frall, bubblelike cockpits nestled in crablike carapaces with insect-wing saits. "We've done a lot of study in speculative xenoblology," he explains.

Infogrames will release Master of Orion III this spring, a few months after Civilization III (see our review on page 92). Are the guys at Ourcksilver worried about being upstaged? Ourcksilver's CEO, Bill Fisher, welcomes the competition. "Sid's going to sell a jillion copies, and we're certainly hoping we might be able to ride on his coattails. Three or four months later, our game comes out and people have played his game to death, and they'll think, "You know, we're about ready for something new."

Emrich figures MOO3 will be the perfect follow-up, "CIv III is a very good conservative approach to advancing the design art," he says. "But we really stretch the genre out. Even if this game falls in part, I think we're going to shine in comparison to the other, conservative approach."

Bunten's prophetic 1990

game that predated even

time strategy titles.

the earliest multiplayer real-



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Buyer's Guide

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Attention, shoppers!
CGW picks the best PC
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Reflex Roger

Rather than spend time jabbing need as into the brainstem. In an effort to continually stimulate his reflexes, this gamen chooses to pour his energy into the ratest in gaming. All the feelings of aggression, dominance, and drive delivered within the safe confines of the computer screen, as opposed to the dangerous 'real world.'



Max Payre

Fuse a Gap commercial with the cinematic stylings of John Meo, and a little Charle Brenzen to the mix, and you get Max Payne, the best action mayie in modern gaming. Sure, it's short, but really, bewanich con who select it all justice de you really need?

No One Lives Forever: Game of the Year Edition
The brilliantly funny script and style of our Action Game of the Year is now updated with a new mission, new enemy, new levels, and even a groovy seundtrack CD. Where else can you find evil spy erganization henchmen discussing their 401ks or talking about starting up a band?

Clive Berker's Undying

Not just enother mediocre entry In the Heliralser series leaturing a shambling pinhead, this game is heaest-to-god creepy, due mostly to its excellent use of sound, Other Innovations (for a shooter, anyway) such as dual-wielding and spells make this a solid buy for the gamer who doesn't mind staining his pants with fear-induced bursts of urine

Madden NFL 2002

Forget shelling out for a satellite system to watch the games every Sunday, Madden 2002 delivers all tre bone-crunching, plaskin-slapping, smashmouth fun you can Imagine, plus It looks like it jumped right off the bigscreen HDTV.

Half-Life: Platinum Edition in one fell swoop you get one of the best games of all time, its follow-up expansion pack, and two great multiplayer add-ons. Even without Blue Shift or Condition Zere, this is great way to introduce gamers to the scariness that is the head crab



Serious Sam

ilt's Doom 2001, where rejentless hordes of critters attempt to shred you into gamer confetti. Bundle this Crostian wonder with the sequel (slated for the holidays also), and welcome hours of "frantic action reeling.



Return to Castle Wolfenstein The original FPS returns with an ans new installment done by the med geniuses behind *Kingpin*. Think Seving Private Ryan with zombies. After tearing through undead Nazis jump into multiplayer, where you can re-enact D-Day Invasions without polishing Grandpa's old Mt. Who doesn't want to kill more goose stepping Nazis?



Kohun: Immortal Soversigns A fascinating real-time strategy game with the depth and complexity of a turnbased game, Kohan lets players focus on levising the best strategies and unit mix for conquering new realms. Highly recommended for fantesy lovers fooking or a change from role-playing.

Civilination III

Helio Civ III, goodye job, goodayel
girlfriend, goodbye life. Every sditor
who's beoted this game, thinking they would play for just a while, suddenly lost four hours of their life, it's probably the best strategy game of the year, and arguably the best strategy game of any year. All bow to Sid Meley, God King of

Commandos 2

I his exquisitely detailed strategy
pame is a central freak's dream. You
command every move of an effic group
who use stealth and luck to call
corrects deep behind enemy lines. Al major improvement over the original and creat for living out your fantasies
of WWII heroics.

Shogun: Warlord Edition law games approach the spiendor this

game portrays. Like an epic Aurosawa movie with a cast of theusands, Shogun's taction battiefield depicts Samural warfars on a grand spale—a sophisticated mix and researce. menagement. Add Warlord Edition's new units and campaigns and you've

Fallout Inction

rated strategy game based on the Fallout RPG series is as violent as it is rewarding. The game effers squad-based tactical combat in the tradition of X-COM and Jagged Afflance, but it is deeper blooder, and harder. Players fight in post-apocalyptic environments to rescus people or take out nostiles in a wastelend populated by mutants, dogs, and irradiated humans. Meaty fara for tectical combat buils.

Stronghold Fancy yeurself a king, do you? Get thee to thy local jaming store and purchase Stronghold, a 'castle sim' that's easily one of the best strategy games thin yean Two eampeldes, tens of single maps, and a multiplayer mede will keep yeu pushing presents around ler nights on end Awesome Bound and unimetion round out

e great game.



Black & White

AND THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPER remarkable achievement in artificial intelligence.

Control Freak

tirey that by the and I have to a very on which gare inc. see what happens. Or see how long the, in kee, however the car Timility of great in the street of the saits the tir der Jear folded. Don't get mad, give them a big hug and a new strategy game. And the title is the state of the memory. didn't allow more time for £ Ry che (1997) is a dis-





FEATURE



Sim Jockey

The Sim Jockey likes to keep it real, as in hardcore realism. He likes to leef as if he's actually in the thick of the action. at the controls of a powerful dream machine, making life. or death decisions on the fly or on the track or even on the battlefield. Easily identified by the scores of joysticks, racing wheels, throttles, and other per photals balted to his cost the Simpockey can task to thou such out form there is a technology or the inner workings of ay maks. Do on fig. Liese people! As in class they seem to be avoid a their own world, they paradox cally have a better grip on reality than a lot of us



Operation Flashpoint: Cold-War Crisis
War may be hell, but this fully interactive bettiefield
simulator can make you appreciate that like no other same
aver has. While it's a first-person shooter at its core, this
game couldn't be more different from Max Payne or Half-Life
you can get in and drive or silot any vehicle, for one thing.
This game is totally unique-and great.

II-2 Sturmovik Whether you prefer the ichallenge of dog-lighting in a rickety tub of Russian bolts to the ultrasiask and ultraboring fire-and-forget missile wars of modern jet combat, or if you just like a little history with your sims, IL-2 Sturmovik should fit the bill nicely.

Microsoft Flight Simulator 2002 The ultimate flight simulator

So detailed and realistic, you'll want to bring your ewn barf bag. Heck, they should just include a pliot's license application in the box. Everything from single-engine Cessnas to behamoth 747s are epresented here, lovingly recreated lown to the just switch and dial on: the instrument panel



Independence Was 2 Tired of filttery little dogfights with

little regard för physics? Haw about a space sim that resembles navel-combat, has Newtonian physics, and offers a Privateur's sense of freedom and customization? The sure choice for the earthbound space commande



NASCAR Racing 4
No, it lan't just hillbillies turning left
NASCAR lens know that races are a
battle of wits, strategy, and pracision
driving. NR4 recreates those qualities
so faithfully that many real Winston
Cup drivers use the game for practice.
Really.

High Heat Major League Baseball 2002

Real baseball goeks are more interested in the subtleties of the split-flingered fastbell then cartoonish home run derbies, so if you haven't discovered the ultra-authentic High Heat series yet, now is the time, For those who crave the drama of the pitcher-batter dual and love to pore over obscure stats and ligures, High Heat is the best (and only) choice

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FEATURE



Mama's Boy

When not in his room playing computer games, the mama's boy is most akely to be found at a comic book convention. playing D&D, or marking off the days on the calendar until the Lord of the Rings movie opens. He may look effete and pale, but underneath that spindly frame is some really neat Gwarven chain mail and the beating beart of a warrior



Diablo II Battlechest

Nething can make the mama's say real more like a rawgin iguy than a good hearty round of *Diablo II*, Dilzzard's epic fantasy extlen RPO. For the holidays, Bilzzard has released the Diable II Battlechest with Diablo II, the Land of Destruction expansion set, Diable I, and a strategy guide-for a measiv \$50. Goes, wholesome, monster-bashing fun for the hyperactive hobbit-lover in your life.

EverQuest Trilogy Alf that mema's boy of yours is the social type. consider getting him into EverQuest-but be warned that you may less him forever The reigning champ of massively multiplayer gamés is still going strong with a couple of sweet heliday deals. The EverQuest Trilogy combines the original game with the Ruins of Kunark and Scars of Vellous expansions. Shadows of Luciin is the brand new expansion, with a new planet, therses, new graphics, and plenty more to keep the alreadyaddicted happy and hooked:



and collects Dr. Who memorabilia, you

can't go wrong with this.

New Mere's a real gift for the manuals boy. If he breaks out in hives, curis up fin a ball, orileads his chess program at the thought of talking to a real girl, why not let him practice his underdeveloped romance skills in the privacy of his own pedraem-in a way that allows the deer te remain open? The Sims: Hot Date is the latest add-on to the megaphenomenon, with more than 40 oneon-one social interactions for him to gractice with his virtual geople. This is no mare game—Hot Date is educational softwarel



Anachronox

Some mame's boys like a sittle istorytelling and humor with their monster-killing. For them, get Anachronox, a goofy and entertaining consola-style RPG that deserves a wider audience. It's not fer everyone. but for the guy in your life who has all the Monty Python routines memorized

Anarchy Online

Hey, your mame's boy isn't just seme kind of fey elf-lover-he also fancies himself a post-specalyptic warrier! Okay, we hear you. We offer Anerchy Online, a massively multiplayer RPG that leans more heavily on sol-fi than fantasy. AO had a rough beginning and plenty of people are less than thrilled with Funcom's erratic and underwhelming support, but the hardcore fans (including a few mama's boys right here at CGW) swear by it.

"We shall fight on the beaches... on the landing grounds.... in the fields... in the streets... in the hills.

We shall never surrender!"

Winston Churchill



WE COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER OURSELVES...

- Thousands of players sharing the online world
- All combat takes place with and against live players
- First-person action
- Combines elements of first person shooter strategy and role-playing games



Enhanced mission and rank systems

with the 1:30 update, it's so much mproved that in many respects it s a ပိုင်းပြုကျမှော experience." Gomputer Games Online, October 2001



suns sontimizated emiss

AKRIEG HAS BEGUN!



Blood Violence







Your Ma

No one loves you like Mom, and yet, of the regions of human beings bewildered, puzzled, and outright disturbed by you, no one is more befuddled than the woman who birthed you. So this holiday try something new, Instead of alienating your family even further, build some bridges and show Mom that gaming is good. Do it for love, do it for unity, and do it to get that nagging harpy off your back so you can play Max Payne in something approaching peace.



Bejoweled

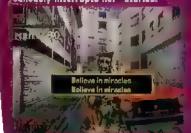
Think of Bejeweled as Mommie Dearest's gateway drug: Once she starts playing this viciously addictive puzzle game, there's no turning back, Remember how you had the repeat third grade (and part of fourth) because of Tetris? Well, that's now effective Beleweled is. And it comes with an added bonus-since you have to download it at www.popcap.com, Mom will learn a valuable lesson about what she's been calling The Inter World Wide Infonet. Superhighway Com.

Zoo Tycoon

When you were a kid, Mem took you to the 200, right? And odds are she didn't try to leave you to be raised by dinges like our moms did right? Let Mom relive those nestalgic days of young motherhood with Microsoft's most heartwarming of building sims. By day, the two of you can chuckle happliy together at the entice of the monkeys. At right, you can let the leopards out to terrorize the visitors.

Typing of the Dead

Even Mom hee a dark side. (Remember that incident with the glue gun?) Let your personal Maternal Godhead blow off steam in this wacky survival horror game, in which her schoolstri typing skills and not her handlness with a gun will save the day. It just might save the life of the next Avon lady that callously interrupts her "stories.



Williams Pinball Classics

Granted, Mom may net understand the istest and greatest gaming technology. but even the most inbred Appalachian baby machine understands pinball. Williams Pinball Classics se faithfully recreates four classic Williams pinball: tables, Mom might actually think she's: In a poodle skirt flirting with boys at the malt shop instead of working two jobs to support your Counter-Strike habit.



Monopoly Tycoon

Remember rainy afternoons spent playing Monopoly with the family and how your brother embezzled maney from the bank and made Dad dance on his toes and sing "I'm a Little Teapot" in a plercing faisetto se he didn't have to pay rent on Marvin Gardens and could eke out one mere peintless turn? Mom remembers too. Manapoly Tycoon will scrub away all those horrible memories with entirely new gameplay that's refreshingly familier, tremendously engaging, and shot through with the vindictive cruelty that's made Monopoly a family favorite for decades.

PU+X81XWXQC+JU8KWRPU+X81XWXQC+JW8KWXL8X+UE

IN DARK, CROUBLED TIMES, A MAN WILL RISE UP TO CHANGE THE FATE OF AN EMPIRE.

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Creative Labs SoundBlaster **Audigy Platinum** Okay, we know that he has a sound card. But does his sound card have a cool-looking breakout box, have 5.1 support, and sport more FireWire norts than Larry King has ex-wives? (Note: We actually don't know how many ex-wives: Larry King has, but we do know that the **Audigy Platinum has** four FireWire ports.) if you answered "no" to any of these questions, then your enarge in cirari Run out and buy one. The teable in your life won't know how to thank you.

Logiteak MOMO Force Driving Wiseal He always wanted a blostime fancy car. Maybe one of them imports, even. But what with making minimum wage dropping dough in vats of grease at the local Krispy Kreme whiist living in his parents' basement, that tricked-out Prejude is looking more and more like a pipe dream. No way do we expect you to buy the slacker some wheels, but for \$200 he can sit In his room and pretend he's ene of the "cool guys" that he sees cruisin' the strip. Uh...maybe not

Windows XP Home Edition Back in '68 Jimmy Hendrix asked the eternal question, "Are you experienced" Well, Microsoft has an answer for you: "If you're not, then you should be." While gamers have always been loath to adopt a new OS, some felias up la Hendrix's backyard-Redmond-have come together to create one: Windows XP (Experience) which not only falls to suck, but actually kicks some bona fide ass. We had the opportunity to test the Justice Department's favorite OS, and on the same: machine, Windows XP achieved frame rates that were on average 10 frames. per second faster than the rates of Windows ME

2GHz Intel Pentium 4 and LEGHE AMD Athlon XP 1800+ As I write this, I'm minutes away from attending an AMD press event where they're going to show off their vaunted new processor, the 1.5GHz Athlon XP 1800+ (or whatever they're calling it these days). Whather it's a 2GHz Pentlum or a 1.5GHz Athlon XP the gadget fresk in your life will love! you forever if he finds one of these beneath the Hanukkah bush

MacGyver

Sure, everyone took digs at Richard Dean Anderson, but when you were freezing your ass off miles away from base camp. you had to love the guy who could make a Quonset hut out of Hostess Fruit Pie bags, a Cub Scout knife, and Bubble Yum. The same is true for hardware guys: Show too much interest in an uninterruptible power supply and you're the laughingstock of your brother Germain's quilting bee. But who gets a call when they need help? So stop laughing at the family linkerer and hook a brother up with some hardware.

VisionTek XTASY 6564 (GeForce3Ti 500) Yeah, yeah, we all know that his 64MB GeForce3-powered Hercules 3D Prophet III gets 3DMark2001 scores of 6000. The thing is, though, with VisionTek's 64MB GeForce3TI 500-based graphics card purring inside that machine, he'll get 3DMark2001 scores nearing 8000. What?! You don't understand the Importance of that?

That's okay; just buy the damn carda



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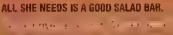












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Reviews

We love games, we hate games Edited by Robert Coffey



How Do We Rate? We review only finished games-no betas, no patches



DAIDNATETUD The care game that gots it all right. A must-play experiunce:

VERY GOOD Worthy of your time and money but there are drawbacks:

AVERAGE EITHE

an ambitious design with major flaws, or just venille:



WEAK Seriously acking in play value, peorly conceived, or just mather clone.



ABYSMAL The rare game that gets it all wrong. Pathetic, Ceaster material





Civilization III

Firaxis takes a risk and produces a Civilization that rules By Jason Kapalka



Mattell Infogrames DNI, OFFE Firagis Games (MILE www.chillzation3 .com (98 KITH), Everyone: mild animated violence MKF 550

> Dougliess Pantium II 300, 32MB RAM, 500MB hard drive Space MICHWARDED ROBRESON Pentium II SOO, SAME DAM enon fuggius syngeringe



ince many people (including me) believe Civilization is the best computer dame

of all time, expectations for any new incarnation are, to put it secately, high, With Civ III Firaxis could have played it safe by just updating the graphics and chucking in a few of the interface tweaks from Alpha Centauri, but instead they've done a full-scale reworking of several key game mechanics. It's dangerous to screw with a classic design. After all, if t a n't broke...

So, the big surprise is that the changes actually work-brilliantly. They add depth and flavor while streamlining glay and e iminating tedium. After playing this version, I find that the former gold standard, Civ II, feels broken, and that's about the best backhanded compliment could give the game.

The graphics for Clv III are certainly good, and include some nice subtle

features, like Montezuma in a suit when you reach the modern era or the ability to custom-build your palace from chunks of different arch tectural styles. But let's face it: Civ is not about the

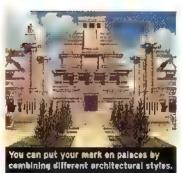
The first major gameplay change you'll notice is that the different civilizations have specific characteristics beyond their starting techs. For example, religious civilizations build temples and the like more quickly, and suffer only one turn of anarchy when switching governments. Each civilization also has an exclusive elite unit that replaces a regular one, such as the

Germans' Panzer tank or the Aztecs' Jaguar Warr or. Some, like the Aztecs, get a boost early on from their elite units, white others, like the Americans with their F-15 fighter, shine much later in the game.

Next thing you'll see is the new Culture rating for each city and empire, based on age and developments like Wonders of the World, libraries, temples, and so on. As a city's culture grows, so do its borders, until eventually it merges with other nearby cities. This gives you a pleasing geopolitical map with real borders, and prevents annoying compater players from traipsing around

If you have even the slightest interest in strategy games, run-don't walk-to get a copy of Civ III.





SCIENCE ADVISOR 900 U. ř. Ŷ 0 No mere foldout charts! The tech tree is new part of the program, nicely arranged and easily viewable in your strangely familiar-looking Science Advisor.







your turf with impunity, Eventually, entire cities near foreign empires with a higher culture may defect to the classier empire.

Negotiation and Dirty Tricks

The next big difference you'll note is in diplomacy and espionage. Diplomat units are gone, instead, you pay money to establish embassies with rival empires. From there, you can haggle for var ous a liances, embargoes, technologies, and goods in an into tive interface that allows for all sorts of interesting deals; You could end up paying a lump sum in gold, plus a yearly fee, to get an ally's support in a mutual protection pact, along with a trade embargo of your loes and perhaps with a couple workers thrown in for good measure. Later on, intelligence agencies allow you to perform dirty tricks with the same menu-driven interface (so now you can avoid spy Invasions).

Trade, too, has undergone a complete overhaul. Caravans are gone, Instead, there is a range of luxury and strategic resources found on the map itself. Luxuries like wine and incense make citizens in your empire happier, while

strategic resources like iron are neces. sary for building advanced units. When you have established a reliable sea or land route connecting with other cap itals, you can trade excess resources or acquire ones you lack from other empires through diplomacy.

Where Irade in the original Civ was almost an optional feature, here it is vital. You may have discovered from working, but if the Greeks have a monopoly on all the sources of the metal inoegionaries for you, pal. Later, other resources appear on the man as you discover new technologies: When you earn atomic theory, you'll see uranium deposits appear throughout the world The appearance of resources makes for much more interesting conflict in the modern eras, when borders have stab lized, as you suddenly realize, for example. That all the available sources of coal or oil are deep in the territories of those damn double-crossing Babylonians

There are a host of more subtle changes. All unit upkeep is now in gold. rather than food or shields, and the Home City concept for military units is

gone, replaced by a War Weariness factor that causes cities to gradually fall. into disorder when fighting under a republic or democracy. Settiers can be automated in a variety of ways, and cities can be put under Al governors. There are a couple new units that put an interesting spin on things, like the Privateer, which flies no flag and can be used to attack other nations' shipping without declaring war.

There isn't enough space to go into every detail, but it should be noted that it was difficult to write this review. because each time I started the game just to check on some detail, six hours mysteriously vanished. What more do you need to hear? If you have even the slightest interest in strategy games-and can't imagine why you're reading this if you don't-run, don't walk, to get a copy of Civ III.

For strategy tips on Civilization III, go to page 136.

VERDICT A A A A A Maybe the best incarnation of the best strategy game of all time.





Commandos 2: Men of Courage

Lead this band of brothers all the way to victory By Jason Kapalka



MERSEN Pyre Studios OFFICER Eldos (SAD) www.eldosinteractive. com ESERVING Teams blood. violence FDIF \$40

ROUGHNIN Pentium II 300. 64MB RAM, 3D card. 2GB hard drive space RECORD ROLL WAS A WAY Pentlum II 500, 128MB RAM, 32MB 3D card. 3GB hard drive space

Upplitusk LAN, Internet

(2-4 players)

hat inakes a great game? Some are simply so polished they have no real weak nesses (think Bizzard titles like Star-Craft). Others are harder to define. They have flaws, all right, often huge and frustrating ones, but their awesome virtues simply outwelch the mistakes. consider the Microprose classics Master of Orion or Master of Magic, both riddled with game-stopping bugs and defect ve-A. on release.

Commandos 2 falls squarely in the latter camp. Although it's shot through with bugs and screw-ups that would remand a lesser title to the bargain bin, the game itself is so damn good you'll forgive almost anything to keep playing

The long, long, long-awaited sequel to the original sleeper hit, Commandos 2 shares the same basic premise and gameplay. You control a squad of WWIIera covert operatives in a series of puzzle-oriented real-time missions against Axis targets-movie buffs will easily recognize missions based on Saving Private Ryan, Bridge Over the River Kwai, and The Guns of Navarone. All the boys from the first game=the Green Beret, the Diver, the Engineer are back, joined now by a host of new characters, ranging from a sexy female spy to an adorable and rather welltrained mutt. In one of the biggest additions to the gameplay, you can also control assorted-and expendable-Allied

froops, which allows for pitched firefights rarely seen in the original title.

Theater of War

Graphically, the game has undergone a hage facelift. The main map still provides a top-down 20 view, but you can rotate it in 90-degree increments for a better view of the action, inside buildings, however the view becomes fully 3D, allowing for smooth rotation of the scene, You can zoom in or out as much as you like, though up close things tend to get a little pixilated and zooming out too far reduces you to playing Where's Waldo to simply find your guys. The maps themselves are huge-several times the size of the

Commandos 2 is so damn good you'll forgive just about anything to keep playing.



Tiny the Green Beret has a surprise in store for this patrolling Nazi.

ones in the first game-and obscenely detailed, offering count ess sniper positions, hiding spots, and of mouble surfaces. Pleasant and not so pleasant surprises abound, like the pretty schools of fish you'll encounter that turn out to be flesh-gnawing piranhas.

Gamep ay has also been beefed up. The first game was criticized for being too puzzle oriented, with assorted commandos being overly specialized althe cost of realism, and many missions solvable with only one trick. The seque. while still a puzzle game, opens up the range of strategic possibilities. Your commandos now have inventories and can pick up and trade assorted items, including weapons stripped from enemy soldiers. Most can now perform common operations like lying up unconscious bad guys or carrying their bodies out of sight. Objects like wine and sleeping pills can be combined to create diversions. and there are a host of traps and tricks available, from smoke grenades to tripwires and landmines. Perhaps most important, you'll no longer automatically lose a mission if one commando is killed. Instead, Incapacitated agents can be revived with the use of a first-aid kill

The 10 missions are huge, multistage affairs, with objectives changing as you proceed. After your submarine crashes in the Arctic, for instance, your entire crew save one is taken captive, leaving you to free your comrades, infiltrate a Nazi destroyer to recover an Enigina machine, and then sabotage the ship and escape in a stolen airplane.

Maps and briefings are available that detail your primary and secondary objectives, but one of the strengths of the game is that there are almost always multiple paths to success. I often found myself ignoring the game's suggested course of action in favor of a plan I'd come up with myself, and a brief survey of fan sites reveals that many players have come up with feasible strategies completely different from my own

It's almost an embarrassment of riches. There's even replayability available via multiplayer co-op mode, hidden bonus



missions to unlock, and three escalating levels of difficulty.

Collateral Damage

There are Ilies in the ointment, however First up is the monstrous 2GB installation footprint, Ouch. Then there are the bugs, ranging from trivial (mission objectives not being properly displayed) to catastrophic (frequent crashes to the desktop). And finally there's the arcane nterface, which may pose the game's single toughest puzzle. Weird bullons appear and disappear, seemingly at random, while important functions are accessible only via a complex and nonintuitive hotkey system. But for all the hotkey action going on, there are no apparent buttons for quick load or quick save, an unforgivable omission in a game that absolutely regures a whole lotta load n' (Note: Ctri-S and Ctrl t, will load and save, but this less than obvious little feature is detailed exactly nowhere in any of the documentation.)

But in the end, none of this really matters: Through sheer force of gameplay. Commandos 2 easily overcomes its weaknesses. It's a terrific game that will likely be emulated for years to come

For strategy tips on Commandos 2, go to page 128.



Despite bugs and interface issues Commandos 2 marches to victory.



these innecent wairuses being used for target practice) by heartless Nazis.



Atari Anniversary Edition

If you loved parachute pants... By Dana Jongewaard

PUBLISHIR Inforcemen 95%, STER Atacl. Digital Ections (001)() www.nfogrames.com (FERMING Everyone MI 514.99

RECHIREVING Pentium 133. IAME BAMBICIONISTIS MOUREMENTS None **HILLIGHTER NONe**

aybe you're tired of the realistic graphics in Max Payne. Perhaps your brain

has filled to capacity with all those key commands for Homeworld. Or it could just be that you really liked the way you looked in those parachute pants, Whatever your motivation, infogrames is back to capitalize on it with the Atani Anniversary Edition.

The 12 games in the package, which includes classics such as Super Breakout and Asteroids, have been "faithfully reproduced down to the last detail " The sounds of the ball bouncing back and forth in Pong and the annoying theme music from Crystal Castles are still there. The reaction time of the mouse is modified so it's mulates the brning of a trackball for Missile Command, Centipede, and Millipede. They've even built the image of an



arcade around each dame screen. Call it the curse of the MTV gen eration: While it's fun to go back in time for a little while, I found my attention flagging after a few rounds of each game, Somehow it just isn't the same

without the surroundings of an arcade.

and soon I was getting my entertainment

from counting the number of pixels on each screen as I played.

VERDICT ***

Great If you're suffering from early: BOs nostalgia, but embarrassing to remember this was once high-tech.



Williams Pinball Classics

Gaming nostalgia for less than two rolls of quarters By Tom Price

fullishit Encore Software fistióité Redoubt (04%; Lwww. encoresoftware.com UNADM Everyone mu \$14.99

SOSTINISTS P266, 32MB RAM, 100MB Install RECOMPLINED PLOCHED MENTS. None Halbiturit Nane

ve always found the concept of pinball games on the computer a little odd. It's kind of like putting a radio show on television. And until now, most computer proball games have been specifically designed to be played on the PC. But for all those pinball purists out there (and other than Brooke Shields and Roger Daltrey, how many are there really?), Redoubt has faithfully recreated some classic tabletops for computer gamers. The results are a bit mixed, but anyone who blew their laundry quarters every week down at the pizza parlor when they should have been home studying for midlerms can appreciate the addictive qualities of the four tables available here

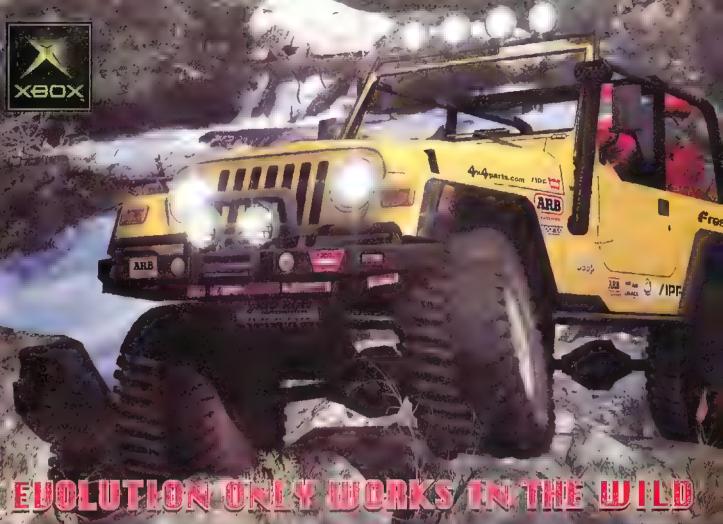
The Creature from the Black Lagoon and the pirate-themed Black Rose are dead-on re-creations of the original tables, including small details like the holographic creature in the middle of the Black Lagoon table and Black Rose's multibail-bring cannon. But oddly, the simplest table, the fantasy-themed Lost World, is the most satisfying, with its two flippers and tack of ramps. Withams Pinball Classics does offer a nice trip



of the four included in the game.

down memory lane, but you won't exactly be compelled to go searching for lost quarters between the couch cush ons.















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THE RELUCTION



Monopoly Tycoon

Cornering the market on fun By George Jones

heldlife Infogrames THURS Deep Red CONTACT WWW manapolytycean.com Start to Everyone

Siccolvinos Pentium 233. 64MB RAM, 90MB hard drive space ALEGNICACIO PLOS BURILLA S Pentlum II 266. **200MB** hard drive Space MATTERNET LAN. Internet (2-6 players)

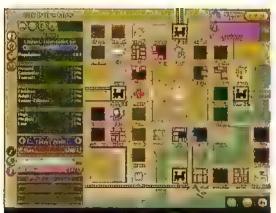


onopoly Tycoon is the rare game that, 20 minutes into playing it, stands out as a winner. So much of a winner, in fact, that it might just be one of the best strategy games of 2001. Gamers ex pecting something light, fluffy, and, well, mainstream, are going to be shocked when they find themselves mmensely enjoying a gaming experence that conjures up shades of M.U.L.E., one of the all-time classic economic strategy games.

Understanding why the game has this effect requires nothing more than transporting your mind back to the days of playing the board game Understanding now Deep Red, the game's third party designers, captured and interpreted the essence of Monopoly is another matter entirely. They



Whenever anyone wants to buy a lease on a property, every one in the game enters the auction mode, one of the most tense aspects of the game.



The classic Monopoly beard has been transformed into a city grid on which you can monitor the competition as well as the needs of your citizens.



Monopoly Tycoon rewards you for building the blight of the suburbs: virtual minimals serving all of your citizen's needs.

captured the simplicity of the rule system, the symmetry of the gameplay, and the depth of the original And they managed to have perfectly ball anced, updated, and enhanced it for the digital age

Monopoly Tycoon offers several twists on the classic game. For example, when you want to buy the lease on a property. you go into an auction mode where everyone gets to bid on, for example, Boardwalk, Ventnot, or Atlantic Avenue

buildings) on Kentucky and indianal Avenues. To squeeze her, you conserve money over the course of one 24 hour period and outbid her on the lease for these properties, with the end result being that for the next 25 game years, she pays you rent for her businesses. You can even buy the utility companies, with the end result being that you collect a certain percentage of everyone's power or water bills

Your style of play can also be influ-

You can set the victory conditions to center around money, property value, or even getting voted mayor.

But If you win the bidding, you hold the deed for only about 25 game years, gr 45 minutes.

Simply exploring the new dimensions of the game offers some thrills, if only because it mandates learning about a completely unique caming environment. When was the fast time you didn't have to concoct variations of the time-tested strategy of "build more units and destroy the enemy '7

This enjoyable experience is further enhanced by the fact that the rules are simple but allow for seemingly infinite. strategies. Monopoly Tycoon even offers the rare experience that allows for reactive, on the fly strategizing. In longer games, you can reverse your play style midgame with positive results. This adds all sorts of decision-making tension, and it also leaves the game wide open strategically

Say your opponent is winning by making a ton of money off of two blocks of shopping centers (groups of retail

enced by how you define winning. The game allows you to choose what you want the victory conditions to center on-money property value, getting kicked out of the city, or even getting voted mayor.

The only area where Monopoly Tycoon falls short of perfection is the At opponents' antagonism, or lack thereof. They play a strong game, but they're just not in your face (or your mind) enough. You want to hate your competitors just as much as you hated your little brother when he beat you for the seventh time in a row, or your Triend who always insisted on being the car token.

But ultimately, that's a micro quibble, because Monopoly Tycoon is one of the most refreshing, engaging games released in a long time.

VERDICT A A classic game begets another classic game.

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Trade Empires

Marco Polo, we hardly knew ve By Bruce Geryk

PHUSHIE Eldon Divinibrie Frog City CONNET. www.eldos.com ESRE BILLIA Everyone 1801 \$30.00

B@B998 Pentium B 300, 64MB RAM. 300MB hard drive space, 8MB 30 graphics card economics SIMPLIFIES Pentium III. 128MB RAM, 16MB 30 graphics card MULTIFICATE Name

ew developers have been able to make economics as much fun as Frog City. The

outstanding Imperialism games were essentially wargames with a detailed economics moder, and the novel twist on empire building games that this combination produced still hasn't been duplicated. Frog City's latest effort buts the economics front and center Only this time, that's all there is

Trade Empires Is a real time strategy game in which you (and really just you, as there is no mult player) develop a network of markets and merchants in a variety of historical eras, ranging from ancient China and Mesopotamia to England just before The Industrial Revolution, Players choose where to establish settlements around the map, and the flow of goods through these seltlements attracts population, creates demand, and generates your income.







Your control over the markets is pretly much total. Cities develop only near centers of trade, so you design your own population landscape by your choice of market locations. Resources are fixed however, and as settlements grow in response to your actions, you have to keep your populations supplied with food and consumer items or your cities will stagnate or disappear altogether. You do this by carefully assigning the routes your merchants will travel and the goods they will carry. The market

the game's large scope. It's like playing a historical trade sim on the moon.

The biggest problem with Trade Empires is that the absence of every Ining except the trade engine makes the game seem unusually flat. Ho istic's old classic Merchant Prince had an element of Venetian politics that, although it wasn't the focus of the game, added another aspect of play that was vital for both strategic and aesthetic reasons, Radroad Tycoon II had its stock market Without any window dressing, the

The 3D terrain seems sterile and prevents the game from developing much of an atmosphere.

model is fairly sophist cated, wills various raw materia's able to be combined into luxury items of greater and greater value, which in turn influences the development of your population

trade Empires is closely related to simgames like Caesar and Pharaoh, with the focus being on the flow of goods over arue distances rather than within a single city. Each market you place creates new demand and supply, and the game responds much like SimCity The option to play without opposing merchants makes this a great game for those who just want to tinker.

At times the game is quite attractive. but for the most part the 3D terrain seems sterile and prevents the game from developing much of an almosphere. Despite the varied architecture in the different eras, the game feels homogeneous, and this undercuts. the large scenario maps that would otherwise convey a great sense of

market model in Trade Empires feels a lot like a mathematical optimization machine. Which, of course, it is. But the remarkable thing about Imperialism was that with its cartoonish praphics and arbitrary geography, it managed to create a far more compelling world than the one in Trade Empires

frade Empires is the framework of an excellent strategy game without any of the trimmings. With a more engaging atmosphere and a strategic context in which to wrap the economics engine. this could have ended up as a classic historical trade sim. As it stands, the game feels, ike a Settlers offshoot designed by J.P. Morgan, which isn't necessarily bad. But it could have been so much more.

VERDICT AND AND AND Challenging historical trade model. undone by sterlilty and a lack of

atmosphere.

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The Nations

Another squatter in Settlers territory By Mark Asher

PUBLISHE Microids NVLOSE negSoftware Hallel www.thenstlonsgame.com/ ESTRIBLE Teen; blood, violence HKI \$29.99

Maintellas, Pentium II 266, 32MB RAM 8MB Direct 3D-competible 30 accelerator card ALCOHOLDADED ELOCATION RAS Pent um II 350, 64MB RAM RUIDFLOOD LAN. Internet (2-8 players)

n The Nations, a Settlers clone that's the seguel to Aliens & Amazons, you take control of one of three alien tribes. The Pimmons are short, squat, blue, fat, lazy humanoids. The Sapikis are insects. The Amazones are a matriarchal, humani ke society. Each tribe comes with a 10 scenario campaign. The paine also supports multiplayer mode, it's fun, but the building you do in each scenario often repeats and there's not much here that you didn't see in Settlers years ago.

The Nations is a city and community builder that gives you dozens and dozens of details to juggle. Do your people have enough soap to stay clean? Is their diel a good one? How far are the houses from the businesses? Are there enough scientists? Are your neighboring tribes happy with you? Are employment levels high enough? You won't lack for things to fiddle with in this game, and at times you may feel a bit besieged by frow much you need to manage. Fai Inc. to meet the needs of your people makes



do much with this information. You're not able to micromanage at that level with any effectiveness, so the information you receive is useless other than for satisfying your curiosity. Even then, your little people will run together in your mind as more or less interchangeable parts.

just observing. At a deeper level, games like The Nations are satisfying because they let you manage their small worlds in a way that the real world can never be managed

The real downlad of The Nations is that it just doesn't distinguish itse f from all the other Settlers-like games. If you're looking for something new in the genre, The Nations won't provide it if you don't mind replaying Settlers under a different name and with a new coal of paint, you it like this game, Otherwise, you might as well just reload one of the four Settlers games

You won't lack for things to fiddle with in this game.

them unhappy and affects productivity. if you like to manage a lot of details, this game will give you your file

In a ned to The Sims, you can view each individual and find out if they are happy, what task they are entiaged in, and so on. The problem is that you can't

The Nations can be guite satisfying when things are humming along and your city is growing and your little people are happily going about their tasks. The well-drawn graphics engage with the whimsy of storybook art, so there's plenty of pleasure to be had in

VENDICT 1 A good-looking game that falls to stand out from the Settlers crowd.



Gadget Tycoon

Sinking faster than a dot-com By John Fletcher

FUTURET Monte Cristo Games MYGGIT Monte Cristo Games (MK) www.montecristonames com (MELINS Teen) comic mischief MCE \$19.99

KINDINGS Pentlum 200. 64MB RAM, 200MB hard drive space MACHINENEL PROJECTION Pentium II Mid-Badis None

hear "Ivcoon game" and think roller coasters and golf courses So when I loaded Gadget Tycoon, I figured I'd be happily tinker ng with...well, gadgets. What I got instead was Amoral Facilities Manager: A management sim that proudly louts slush funds, mob int midation, and industrial espionage as legit mate business tools

After an amazingly depressing opening sequence, you slog through an inconsis tently explained tutorial. Fortunately Gadget Tycoon is not difficult and soon you're running your company Select a gadget (loilet, rober blades, or house cleaning robot) and quickly get to the business of designing, building, and

selling the proverbial better mouse trap. In this respect Gadget Tycoon succeeds. Developing your facility and balancing finances requires attention to detail, awareness of the competition, and a good sense of timing (Try releasing new products before Christmast) The dame really disappoints, however, in its promised department of dirty tricks. The thugs leel like afterthoughts because, unlike other employees, you never get to see them in action, instead they do their dirly deeds offscreen and email you their results.

Ultimately, Gadget Tycoon cannot reconcile the competing visions of subtle business sim and exercise in Wild West



cap tausm, and the clumsy attempt to blend the two ideas kills the potential of both of them.

VERDICT AANANANA Too many tollets and not enough: qadqats.





Ray: Everything was fine with our system

until the power grid was shut off by

discless here.

Walter Peck: They caused an explosion!

Mayor: Is this true?

Venkman: Yes, it's true. This mag has no disc.



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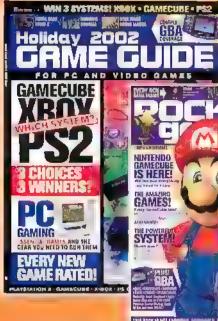














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Independence War 2: Edge of Chaos

Space sim of the year By Gordon Berg



füllütt infogrames BIRDOR Particle Systems (MIME www .Independence-war2 .com/93/M/K Everyone; mild language, animated violence MIL \$40

संग्रह्माताड Pentium II 300, 64MB RAM. 750MB hard drive space MCMMINCO DEMNIST Pentium III, 126MB RAM WHITIME LAN, Interset. GamuSpy (2-8 players)

1 of 1 of april a a conta inks about every new game a far year is probably this! Is it more In the Colores we Ving Communiter? The for the former stems from II. A by III III ws players to truly go

7 1, 10 1, 7 5 17 e it, it is the me titto, a te re a series of space-combat games set of the constraint which is a sign of sign of the ofter a placement to the pointment of many a space lanality on y tragames sie!), 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 [** * ** ** op. ','/2" ' Unit winned her sor to the conmissions from a star of the ker of the The execution X Wine and the same Jenes mirourse have a company

141 4 11 4 111 Li cia stud alla aplaca aplaca compat? The answer is that it's almost both For the most part it bridges the gap between the Elite and Wing Commander styles of gameplay by including the best of both worlds...er,

i n i i , i in ence the State on the space genre. In addition to 111 1 11, 0 e of the sed self by 1 - (, 1 -) , 1 - 0 ryo seen done before. For the East Irme, players 1 1 1 m 71 v 1 r a programme comp

of the righter obig a very (mg mble drove heat is in iesa til 2 cutain ics this trend: Despite the availability now of smaller and more mane iverable craft, the game demands that you exercise light control over your own ment a in order to survivo

While this officients, a space field is I hat to or ginal independence War. sterans, the steep learning curve might prove a rude welcome for those new to Li B Fros Clarer S. it can sot of other was raide to east new players rate the and pendence War writen sector this second go-acound, and in Lithe come the clast, nuch #2 prefty and it is to prepare woice be space.

IW2 bridges the gap between the Elite and Wing Commander styles of gameplay.



warriors for their in tial combat in the preliminary act. Unless the player somehow liqures out how to incorporate the use of thrusters in addition to the simple control offered by the joystick and throttle (you should learn to circle-strafe, for example), the initial encounters might prove unbearably difficult

Smart Missions, Minor Setbacks

Stick with it, though, and you'll move into the actual story, it's a century after the first game, and you play the part of recently orphaned Cal Johnston. The missions you fly as young Cal function well as the game's primary tutorial, though combat training is poor. At your side is the Alicharacter of Jefferson Clay (who somet mes resembles Max Headroom), serving as a companion and ou de.

You're much older in the next act, and this is where the game really opens up. At this point IW2 breaks from its predecessor's finear style, taking on Eliter and Privateer-like elements white still deliver no the goods on a worthwhile story. Missions that move the story along are clear and obvious. The open-ended space trading, manufacturing, and piracy are left up to the player's discretion, though such operations can be initiated solely from the home base. Ult malely, the only real purpose of this pseudo-Privateer style of play is the eventual and necessary attainment of better equipment for your ships. You can go just about anywhere (and there are a lot of places to go), but unless it's part of the narrowly driven narrative, you can't do anything of significance once you arrive

There is one other contentious gameplay Issue, which stems from the save system and various mission difficulty evels: Saves are possible only when you're at the main base, IW2 doesn't offer anything nearly as bad as Bethesda's Echelon, but the lack of an in-flight save option can be quite annoving on a 20-minute mission that taxes several attempts to solve. To



will be missing out on the best way to navigate IW2's cool interface.





Attention to detail in IW2 is extremely high and the Direct3D graphics are fantastic.

counter this, you can scamper home at each free moment to save your progress, but the time it takes to do so can be annoying and distracting when you are eager to get on with play.

Rich Rewards

Apart from these few gameplay problems, IW2 is executed flawlessly. The attention to detail is extremely high the Direct3D graphics are fantastic, and the story is worth pursuing. The use of the joystick's hat as a means of HUD navigation is well implemented. There are even various multiplayer modes beyond the standard (and now very

state) deathmatch. Plus, there's an online component players can log into that resolves the progress and actions of compelling factions through a turnbased tracking system.

Although we question some design choices, IW2 has derivered the depth, high production value, and polish sorely lacking n many other games these days. If one has the patience, IW2 is quite rewarding

For strategy tips on IW2, go to page 122.

VERDICT TO THE RESERVE The closest thing we've had to Elite or Privateer in a long time.





Command & Conquer: Red Alert 2-Yuri's Revenge

Westwood's evil genius By Elliott Chin

founki Electronic Arts

Millionit Westwood

Studios 20041

www.wsstwood.com

[201405 Teen; violence

MIL \$29.95

HOMICH'S Pendum II
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space KINNSHIN
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LAN, Internet (2-8



plitting off from the Command & Conquer continuity allowed the Red

a better real-time strategy game one with all the usual high caliber features but with the added advantage of not taking itself too seriously. The expansion, Yura's Revenge, adds more of the same time travel piot, sense of humor, fast-paced gamepfay, and everything else that made Red Alert 2 a great game.

Alert 2 designers the freedom to create

The expansion introduces an array of new features. Both sides get new units and buildings, although Westwood wasn't as generous with the Soviets. The Allies get Robot Tanks (specifically designed to counter all the new mind controlling units) as well as Navy SEALs, guardian GPs, and the battle fortress—a sort of mobile bunker. The Soviets, meanwhile, in the game's only blunder in balancing.

do not have a counter to the mindcontrolling units. And part of their tech tree got pruned. Yuti's Revenge gives the Soviets a pality two new units. a heroicalled Boris who can call down MiG air strikes, and the siege chopper.

Aside from the new Allied units, the other bright note is the new laction. Yur's army He has his own tech tree with unique units. Considerable

without using combined arms), but because the missions are set up as prizzles, with the enemy typically deeply entrenched. It is a large challenge trying to survive the computer's onstaught of superior numbers while also probing to see how best to attack the enemy fortil cations. Still, the missions are very fun, and precisely because the battles are so hard-fought, you have a Iceling

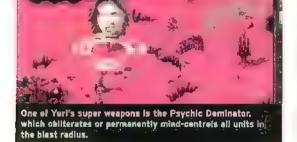
You get more of everything that made *Red Alert 2* a great game.

creativity went into crafting Yuri's army, resulting in such units as fast-firing Gatling Tanks; mind-controlling infantry called Yuri clones; a hover tank that evitates and draws enemy vehicles close to your mind-grabbing clones, and a liying saucer that can shoot lasers and power down structures. Yuri's answer for the Allies' prism technology and the Soviets' Tesla weapons are his Gatling guns. Of course, Yuri also has a large arsenal of psychic weaponry, including his Yuri clones, a mind-controlling tank that can control up to three enemy units, and the Psychic Tower that can dominate even more minds.

With only seven missions each, the Alfied and Soviet campaigns are quite short, But each mission is hard-not because the AI is good (in fact, it often just Throws units at you single-life, of accomplishment upon finishing each scenario. A notable omission is that of a Yuri campaign that really lets you experience the new faction, but at least you can play it in multiplayer games.

Yuri's Revenge is in every way an improvement over its predecessor. It has good new units, a challenging and funcampaign, movies as good if not better than those of previous C&C titles, and some new features. Fans of Red Alert 2 will enjoy this expansion. And those who have never played Red Alert 2 now have an even better excuse to try the game.

For strategy tips on Yuri's Revenge, go to page 133.





SWEEPSTAKES ZONE! WELCOME TO



GRAND DRIZE ONE TRIP TO AIR COMBAT SCHOOL IN SAN DIEGO FOR ONL FULL DAY OF REAL NIFFLANE DOG FIGHTING. The Flighter Land in Program Includes & Rightle of approximately one boy. Their which exhausted with a flight in the morning with a pre-troop with an entitle and mandages and flight distriction thereases to allow allot an enter a briefing form in the afternoon to prepare for the moond meaton. At the and of the day, was assumed that gother thin converse from toxon trigit instruction in tolly secure, in tolly secure and



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The Typing of the Dead

Move over, Mavis! Now there's something meaner! By Dana longewaard

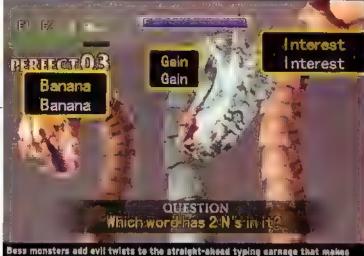
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attanens Pentium II 233, 660MB hard drive, 64MB RAM EFCOMMENDED RECLINEMENTALS. None BURNING LAN (2 players)

t's not a lame plot. The voice acting is awful, And for the past three weeks. we've been fighting over whose turn it is to have it. No. it's not the latest Playboy video release. It's The Typing of the Dead.

A Japanese import based on the rail shooter House of the Dead 2, The Typing of the Dead remains exactly the same as its predecessor, with one exception; instead of defending yourself with a gun, you're protecting the city with only the keyboard strapped around your neck. As James, you patro the city with your colleagues, attempting to free the locals from the plaque of zombles that has infested their homes. Ghouls pop up, ready to destroy you if you can't type "Too bad about your face" or "hairy godmother" fast enough to make them splat away into puddles

You earn points by killing zombies, saving citizens, and picking up bonus Items along the way. You must battle your way through six chapters, to be confronted at the end by the altimate evil, the Emperor, who can assume the



up the majority of the game.

fighting forms of all the other heasts you've met along the way.

This game is incredibly addictive. The plot doesn't make all that much sense-I never quite figured out why the zombles were there or whom I was avending or what happened to my coworkers by the end of the game. But ultimately, I dign't really care. Who needs an excuse to shoot up same zambies? And you don't have to ligure out who the bad duys are-they're easily identified by the words and phrases that pop up across their chests.

With five modes of play (arcade, original, boss, drill, and tutorial), the ability to adjust difficulty level and word length, and new words and phrases for every round, the game stays enterlaining through each replay.

The best part about this game? You can justify the need to play it at work because it helps you develop an essential business skill. And if you're really persuasive, you might even convince your company to buy a copy of it for you.

VERDICT A A A A

If this same were used to teach keyboarding, every kid would get en A+.



Zax: The Alien Hunter

Another Diablo clone arrives D.O.A. By Jason Bables

DooWol. SHEET Productions (ITEI) Relievive Entertainment CONTROL MANUEL EMPTY честве сот (52) NUME Teven; blood, gore, violence HID \$40

Daubichi Pentium II 266, 32MB RAM, 240MB hard drive SORGE ECONOMICS Buthdat Pentium III 450, 64MB RAM MINUTE LAN, Internet (2-16 players)

I's tough to be a little game developer that isn't owned by the French, You're probably dangling by a financial thread that realistically will last for only another two years (or two games), which translates into having limited resources that prevent you from crafting Pixar-caliber cut-scenes or hind better designers and writers. Despite such hurdles, some companies stili make fun, enjoyable games (think Serious Sam), so we're wrking to cut the little guys some slack and simply enjoy some games for what they are, Hel . enjoy Bigames much as Lenjoy Bimovies. There's something appealing in raw, unpolished (and yes, campy) works of art. Alas, Zax is no Plan 9 from Outer Space; this game should never have been published in its current condition.

This is the bugg est game I've ever prayed: I stopped counting types and incidents of crashes after 45 train wrecks spanning multiple, top-of-the-fine

computers at our lab. One of the more egregious game killers happened whenever I fired one particular weapon. It created a nifty light effect right

before freezing my computer solid every time used t. Nothing like switching to said weapon by accident in the heat of battle and then see ng all of your work frozen in time. Even worse are the bugs that suddenly reboot the computer, Nice,

It doesn't matter how apparing the voice acting is or how sound bugs. caused the speakers to blast a noise ixe that of rabbits being skinned alive. with a butter knife. What can you say about a game like this, if you can't even play a game like this?

It's pointless to call this a Diablo ctone with faser guns (oops, guess I just did), and it's not even worth throwing Zax a bone and saying it's rendered nicely and

The seenery is nice, the bose is big, and that's the best this

game has to offer,

had some good ideas in theory. Well, okay, for bone throwing purposes. Gathering ore and crystals to make more than 10 weapons offers some variety, and you can make portable sentry guns and drones that fly around you for protection. My bone supply is now officially depicted.

It's sad to pick on this game, Actually, I feet like a schoolyard bully because it's not worth the time. And it certainly isn't worth your time to play it.

Mom said that if you couldn't say. anything pice, then shut up form crickets)...



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Pool of Radiance: Ruins of Myth Drannor

You'll be drowning in puddles of irrelevance By Rob Smolka

MISMAR Ubi Soft DM.OHI Stormicust Stud as COMAT www. paol-of-radiance.com (SERUING Mature; animated blood and violence MC 349.99

HOSSIMALS PORTRUM IN 400, 64MB RAM, 505MB Pard drive space RECOMMEND MIGHNESS PORTRUM II, 128MB RAM, 845MB hard drive space NOTHING PORTRUM LAN, GameSpy (2-6 players)



like to compare my time with Pool of Radiance. Ruins of Myth Drannor (PoR) to par-

tic pating in a marathon, Difficult under the best of conditions, so imagine if you had to run it wearing a pair of tootight winglips and with a large sack of potatoes strapped to your back. Then just as you pass the 20-mile marker someone from the crowd shatters both your kneecaps with a sledgehammer.

This highly ant cipated follow-up to the classic Gold Box game from 1988 has to be one of the most disappointing releases in the history of computer gaming. The terrible character creation process and pedestiran dungeon design are surpassed in incompetence only by the nonexistent story, frustrating interface, and game-destroying, buggy code. Consider yourself fortunate if various hardware conflicts keep you from installing this dog-some lucky souls have

had their operating systems decimated simply by trying to uninstall PoR.

Mind-Numbingly Dull

PoR makes a mockery of the essential character development process. Forget about spending time rolling the dice until you get the stats you want, the lame-brained system in PoR gives you a set number of points to add to your base scores, limiting your choices to an average jack-of-all-trades type or one with a single nigh score and little else. Yes, you can plok your race, class, alignment, and name, but that's about as much customization as you'll be able to do-each class starts off

with a predetermined set of skills and equipment. Even spell casters are restricted to choosing only a couple of spells they prefer—the rest are computer assigned and unchangeable.

To be fair, PoR does have some good points. The animations are all fun to watch (at least the first dozen or so times), and the combat system does an excellent job of portraying the turnbased tactical battles of the Dungeons & Dragons pen and paper game. The artwork is generally good, and the user-annotated automap is helpful, That's where the compliments end.

Battles are way too numerous and

This highly anticipated follow-up is one of the most disappointing releases in the history of gaming.



The magic and special effects are nicely done, but \mathbb{N}^n abvious the artists can out of time or inspiration when designing the bland and repetitive dungeon.

consist of the same creatures over and over again. When you first enter the dungeon, you'll light groups of orcs, skeletons, and zombies, and little else. As you find ways to access the other levels (there is only one, albeit sprawing, dungeon with levels above and below the Main Hall), you'd run into groups of progs-which are basically just tougher pres-ancient zombies and skeletons (the same creatures as before, just with more hit dice), and bunches of izardmen. One battle paick v starts to feel like every other and there's no way to avoid them, meaning you have to spend IO to 30 minutes (depending on the number of loes) tighting it out turn by grueling turn The other major d sappointment is the lack of variety in the dungeon: All levels took and feel exactly the same right down to the chairs, beds, and tables.

If the mind-numbing battles and drab scenery haven't already turned you off, don't worry -there's still the annoying interface to send you over the edge Grouping your characters is an exercise in frustration, and positioning someone in the right spot can drive you insane. Then there are the tiny fonts of the menu screens to deal with during combal, and the annoying way you have to re-click on a magic dem you want to



The map lets you make your ewn notes, which is a great help considering that all parts of the dungeon look the same.

use even though it's already in your hand, and the frustration of losing a character's turn because usually you hit the space bar to indicate you've linished the turn but sometimes the game will automatically end the turn for you, and...

Cannot Compute

Our policy at CGW is never to review a game without finishing it, and technically thaven't broken that rule, even though it was the game that decided when I was linished. After I'd burned some 60 hours on PoR, it crashed and wouldn't let me continue. Every time I loaded a saved game. I was kicked back to the opening screen, sent back to the desktop, or





allowed to continue only to be tossed out when I tried to save again. To have players invest that much time in a game and then snatch away all of their progress is completely unforgivable

As we go to press, a patch has been released that supposedly solves the corrupted save-game problem. Sadly, if you've already experienced the problem. the patch does nothing to fix it. (An earlier patch was also issued to fix the uninstall program-but again, it was of no help to those whose OS was already trashed.) We understand that given the complexity of games today, minor bugs can crop up, but situations like this are inexcusable. This game should never have been released; at the least it should have been recalled as soon as the troubles surfaced, Combine These egregious problems with the humdrum gameplay and design, and you have a serious candidate for coaster of the year.

VERDICT *** Impossible to recommend without

the patch, impossible to recommend with the patch.

GROUP THERAPY?

PoR offers multiplay for up to six, but I can't imagine that anyone would want to subject themselves to this terture online. The game creates a random dungeon (which, even by accident, has to be more interesting than the dreck that is the predesigned dungeon), and you get to trudge around killing monsters accompanied by guys named d00dman69 and h8m0ng3r. No thanks



Far Gate

Lost in space...completely and utterly By Thomas L. McDonald

DESIGNED Microids enco & Super X Studios (00kg) www microlds.com (Sthillie: Everyone: vlolence Mili S29.99

Succession Pentium II 233, 64MB RAM. 350MB hard drive Space PEROVINENCE MOURDISES Pontram Dr 450, I28MB RAM. 32MB 3D accelerated graphics card validated LAN, Internet (2-4 players)



ny three-dimensional strategy game stands or falis on its interface.

because movement inside a giant maginary cube trather than on the conventional flat plane) is hard to convey on a two-dimensional screen. Homeworld tackled this prickly problem and only just squeaked by with a manageable control scheme. Far Gate doesn't fare oute so well. The developers at Super X Studios certainly gave it their best shot, packing Far Gate with colorful graphics and odd units. Unfortunately, they also decided to reinvent the wheel by creating a new kind of interface.

Far Gate tells its main story through a 16·m: 55 on campaign game, introducing three races along the way, it's a modest colonists in a hostile environment tale, but generally well told with cut-scenes. and dialogue accompanied by strange







little cartoon portraits of the characters During the campaign, humans encounter the primitive, organic Nue-Guyen and the highly evalved, crystal-based Entrodu (thus earning the developers graduate credits in Sci-Fi Gaming Clichés 101). The campaign and a very limited multiplayer mode are it for gameplay: there is no skirmish mode,

Super X has actually done some interesting things with the races. Visually, the game is guite sharp, with vivid colors and loads of unit detail and animation The Nue-Guyen are like grant space

they also pop up whenever you try to move the camera around or issue orders anywhere near the edge of the screen They can be locked down, thus obscur ing large swaths of the screen, or removed completely, thus removing access to essential tools. Either way, the arrangement doesn't work

Neither does the camera control, which erther zooms in too close or out too far to be of use. You can modify the zoom manually, but this often takes time and is very awkward, Running the mouse over an object causes a bizarre, useless

The interface contains almost every possible mistake you can make and introduces a few new ones.

animals, with ships such as the Blood Worm, which spits stomach acid: the Talon, which pierces enemies to inject corrosive enzymes; and the electricityspouting Ee. Structures and their uses vary silgntly from race to race, sharing a common base-building technique that uses limited slots around a central floating hub. Resource gathering is largely automated. You can easily group anits into fleets and give them complex orders and formations (Claw, Wedge, and so on), right out of the Homeworld playbook. Units, structures, races, and narrative are well conceived and molemented.

The problems are in controlling all this. The interface contains almost every mistake you can possibly make when building game controls, and it introduces a few new ones. First, it uses margin panels that run along all four sides of the screen. These pop up when you run your mouse over them, providing access to more advanced controls. This means

enlargement of that object to pop up. obscuring the very area you're looking at In the wide strategic views, ships become so small they often disappear. Getting the right angle is monstrously difficult. And when you're trying to pilot ships in the heat of battle, the controls become completely unterable. Having to use the same mouse button to select units and issue move orders doesn't help much either. There's also an incred bly frustrating glitch that turns your vertical control into a unit selection box

Far Gate is simply too frustrating to recommend. The developers created an interesting game with some novel leatures, but they then saddled it with controls that completely negate the experience.

VERDICT A A COLOR

A sloppy interface renders a potent tially interesting game nearly. unplayable.



Rails Across America

Rock (solid) Island Line By Bruce Geryk

FUBILITY Strategy First DIVIDITY Flying Labs (UNIV) www. .strategyfirst.com (ISELING Everyone MICL \$39.99

COMERCAS PORTIUM 200, 64MB RAM, CODMB hard drive space SECONDRESS REQUESTED NO. 1917/1918 LAN, Internet, CameSpy (2-8 players)



T

o rephrase an old adage, game designers constantly talk about improving

gameplay but lew of them actually do anything about it. With Ralls Across America, Flying Labs has managed the nearly untrinkable; the marriage of board game-like strategy to a sophis ticated engine that could only exist in a computer game. The result is a fast playable, challenging game with a depth no board game can match and an elegance that puts traditional sims to shame.

1998's Railroad Tycoon II has cast a long shadow over rail strategy games, but Rails Across America leaps out of said shadow by being a very different animal. Whereas Tycoon is all about the nuts and bolts of running individual trains and cargo loads, Rails is much closer in style to Simtex's classic 1830–except that Flying Labs opus lets you build a rail empire across the entire United States, as well as much of Mexico and Canada. The decisions that matter are the big ones: where to build and how much money to spend while doing it.

The objective is not necessarily to make money but rather to gain prestige through maintaining an efficient network, making the most of your investment, and dominating traffic in various regions. Prestige is also awarded for completing large projects like a transcontinental rail line or a line that connects all the othes in Mexico.

As your trains chug from city to city, the game's detailed cargo routing engine accounts for every new track, train, and signal upgrade in your network. As new rail lines open up, traffic is rerouted to take advantage of more efficient routes Adding new engines and expanding track





streamlined design. All of this taxes place at a brisk pace in real time, especially if a ayed at the faster speeds. The inability to perform actions while the game is paused adds to the sense of urgency without ever making the game seem rushed. Perhaps the game's only flaw is challenging solo game in a variety of mistorical eras. The polished graphics even reflect the times, with cities is only expanding and eventually acquiring historical landmarks, like Seattle's Space Needle or the Sears Tower in Chicago. The historical aspects of the game aren't just for Ilavor, either Games taking place in later years hirroduce increased labor costs, shifting city values, improved engines, and considerations such as electrification that greatly effect strategy.

Rails Across America is one of the best-designed games to come along in years. It's a strong cand date not only for best strategy game of the year, but best multiplayer game as well.

For strategy tips about Rails Across America, go to page 135.

VERDICT AAAA

Nice graphics, fun cinematics, interesting units, fun interactive campaign map.

This is a fast, playable, challenging game with a depth no board game can match.

capacity are essential to keep your network competitive. You can even form alliances with other players to fix prices in cities where you control the traffic, or undercut others through rate wars.

The genius of this combination is that the routing engine gives the stream ned board game-like mechanics a feeling of incredible depth without muddying the game's elegance in the least. A system of playing cards for exerting influence over other players adds to the

that it doesn't play web as an extended campaign—once the majority of track building is done, tweaking individual lines for maximum efficiency becomes a bit ledious. The result is a game that plays best in less than an hour

Like the board games that were clearly to inspirat on Ralls Across America shines brilliantly as a multiplayer affair, especially with freewheeling cardip ay and stop-the-leader tactics. The Allis more than competent, which makes for a



Dominions

A game this big from a company this small that works this well? By Tom Chick

PERSONAL HIMINTER SOMOTO Historistee CONTICL www.ishwinter .com/dominions.html 1993 tills Not rated HIG 525

HOUSE INTERPORT FOR 16 MB OAM, 75MB hard drive space ISTORGERAS BOURSHING Name MAISTANTE SPROM Play by



o say Dominions is a turnbased fantasy-themed strategy game is just the

beginning. Sure, Dominions has armies, m litias, holy men, mages, and mercenaries. It's also got a hall of fame with special awards for the heroes who join Its ranks. It's oot stats like encumbrance. fatigue, and leadership. It's got duels, magic items, and enchanted gems that fue, nowerful spells, it's got taxes, food and product on resources. It's got undersea empires, flying monsters. secret shrines, and veteran sold ers. It's got powerful global spells that can blot oul the sun.

Lead the heavily armored soldiers of Ulm with a Titan wearing Boots of the Beligmoth and flinging Magma Boits, Stay at home with an immobile Sphinx to research new spells and let the unending waves of Ermor's undead do the conquering. Combine a repti lan race and their carnivorous slave warrior kzards with a demigod dragon that can shapechange at will into a powerful mage. Or spend your setup points on a powerful civil: zation that spreads order.



productivity, and good fortune to all the lands it conquers. Speed up time so everyone ages and dies sooner. What Dominions might lack in graphics, it more than makes up for in imagination and scope

Dominions gets points for being as vast and varied as it is. But it also gets points for tying everything together so well. It is an ambilious game, but unlike most amb tious games, its ambition-toachievement ratio is right around til.

Although it's perfect for email based multiplayer, Dominions' formidable Alalso works well for single player games. Perhaps most important, you get the kind of support you can get only from a small, dedicated developer (which, in this case, consists of three people in Sweden). with each successive patch, Illwinter has been adding new leatures and polishing



a diones, it could still use a few interface. tweaks, such as a better way to sort and filter troops in an army, and it desperately needs a post battle debrief so you can count the dead. But otherwise, this is one of those unsung titles that you might have never found and will be sorry if you miss.

What Dominions might lack in graphics, it more than makes up for in imagination and scope.



AAA-level gameplay, scope, and variaty coupled with shareware level graphics and interface.



Ominous Horizons

We believe in the separation of church and shooters By Mark Asher

NUMBER N'Lightning Software National N'Lightning Software DAVE www.n-lightning com 1993 RUN. Teens animated violence APRIL 520.05

SOSSESS Pentium II 266, 64MB RAM. 400MB hard drive Space ECM01013 MAR BMSSI IZEMBRAM GURURI SPOT None



nward Christian so diers. and get ready to do baitle with the forces of Satan

in Ominous Horizons, an FPS with a Christian theme.

Your task is to retrieve the scattered. fragments of Gutenberg's first printed Bible so his faith will be restored and he can rebuild his vandalized pointing press. and mass-produce Bibles, much to the delight of the Gideon Society. You're armed with a Sword of the Spirit that shoots flaming balls of, faith? There are also weapon and armor approades throughout the game.

You'll battle in the Mesa Verde. where demonic forces now occupy Pueblo City, in Egypt where you'll encounter Anubis, in the Scottish Highlands where Grendel awaits: in

Japan with ninjas and dragons; in a Mayan Temple, a haunted mansion near Stonebenge with druids and witches; and I nally In the Underworld.

I's a nice lineup of baddies, but Ominous Horizons' good intentions are undone by a third-rate 3D engine (think Might and Magic VI) that pauses to load textures. The game is also far Loo dark at Limes, even with the gamma settings maxed.

As for the gameplay, you get the garden-variety dodge and circlestrating you've done gozens of times before in other, better shooters. You can download better fan mods.



Ominous Horizons is aimed at a niche inarket, and that market isn't first person shooter fans. Christian soldiers should look for better ways to sharpen their FPS skills.

VERDICT ***

It's the same gameplay that's in every other dang shooter but done on much worse engine. Gamers should look elsewhere.





RuneSword II

ou take a new game.

Old School is back in session By Arcadian Del Sol

PROBLEM Shrappel Games 019H0710 Crossout Games (falls) www.runesword .com \$88 kink Not rated INC \$39.95

flossinitis Pentium 166. 32MB RAM, 30M8 hard drive space OLDONOLISCH RECKREWENTS 64MB RAM

MUTHING SUPPLY Name

home and prepare for what may well be the greatest experience ever designed, but guickly discover there really isn't much of a game behind all the pretty colors and delightful music. Once upon a time, graphics came in 16 fast ionable colors and music often sounded like the jingling ring tones of a cell phone. We didn't have highspeed video cards and wave-table sound cards. In this age of power rigs. we've become so infatuated with technology that we've lost sight of what makes a great computer game.

handful of annoving bugs you'll have to endure, but if you give this game a second chance, you just might find yourself emoving it. I was not terribly impressed at first and was prepared to destroy the game in my review. But on a whim, I tried down cading a few Tomes that other players had created using the construction tools in RuneSword II. I found them not an y fun and entertaining but inspirational as well and I decided to make my own Tome. While my lack of programming experience makes the exercise frustrating at times, I ve found the online community to be not only very

While other games try to improve upon the genre, RuneSword II just wants to be a fun role-playing game.

Much like its predecessor, Rune-Sword II is a game that strives to be an authentic adaptation of the classic RPGs we used to play, right down to the sounds of dice rathing across the labletop. While other games try to improve upon the genre, RuneSword II. just wants to be a fun role-playing game-aithough calling it a game is not entirely accurate it is, in fact, a design studio that ships with several very well written demonstration campaigns called Tomes. You start by creating a small party and choosing which Tome to play. There are a

talented but happy to help you out when you aren't sure what a local

This game is not going to win any awards, but if you're like me and you miss the good old days when games were measured by how closely they imitated Bard's Tale and Wasteland, then this one just might be what you were looking for.

VERDICT A TORON

A great niche game whose niche is unfortunately very small.



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Mat Hoffman Pro BMX

The best BMX game ever (for what that's worth) By William O'Neal

BINISHS Activision RIGHTER Neversoft CONTACT WYWEN activision.com BIS 20% Everyone HKI \$39.99

EQUIDANT Penteum H 266, 64MB RAM. 550MB hard disk space, SMB 3D graphics card Milliand Household Mone

hen Activision sent us a few copies of Mat Hoffman Pro BMX it seemed only natural that I, the only guy in the office who actually races BMX bikes, should get to review it. It should come as no surprise that I imped at the chance, only to curse Reviews Editor Robert Coffey

about two levels in

Mat Hoffman Pro BMX is based on Activ slon's vaunted Tony Hawk Pro Skater engine, and that's about where we should end all positive comparisons While the game borrows much of its gameplay from the Tony Hawk franchise one gets the feeling that the makers lost interest sometime during the develop ment process. White both versions of THPS offer inspired, unique pameptay and excellent level design, and showed a general commitment to putting together a fun product, Mal Hoffman Pro BMX feels like more of a hack job.

The game starts out just as you'd expect, with the player choosing from



Without the addictive gamepley of a Teny Hawk Pre Sketer, ; the creaky console graphics are a little more savieus.



One gets the feeling that the makers lost interest sometime during the development process.

a list of-while accomplished-mostly old school riders such as Mat Hoffman. "Butcher" Kowalski, Simon Tabron, and others: Cory Nastazio is the only new school guy. You then choose your bike, and, as you do in the Tony Hawk games, you have to unlock the more bitchin' bikes, it's important to note that you can customize your bike to make it faster, lighter, or better for everything from manualing to bunny hopping. But I would have preferred for the individual components to represent real-world parts-it'd be cool to build a bike with S&M Pilchforks and Slain bars

Once you start moving through the first level, you'll find there's no denying that MHPBMX is basically THPS on a bike. You're presented with the same list of five or so objectives, one of which (of course) requires you to knock something over-this is like the skaleboard game's version of the ubiquitous "crate full o' stuff ' that's in nearly every first-person-shooter ever made Where in THPS the player advances through levels by earning money, in MHPBMX you advance through the game's eight levels by landing on magazine covers. The payoff is essentially

the same and the gameplay is pretty much identical to that of THPS

And to tell you the truth, the game play was pretty fun-for about two levels. After that, MHPBMX began to feel way too repetitive, And while it's easy to point out how repetitive THPS was, it had what the French call that certain "I don't know what" that compelled you to keep playing. But I had no desire whatspever to continue playing this game

Of course MHPBMX sports multiplayer modes similar to those in THPS, but they're not nearly compelling enough to make up for the uninteresting gameplay. It seems that MHPBMX was designed to appeal to BMX riders. The main problem though, is that MHPBMX makes me tust want to turn off the computer and ride a real bike. And non-BMX riders will have Little reason to play this game, what with a better and more compelling version of the same idea (in the form of THPS) lying around.

VERDICT AND TOTAL

Better than Dave Mirra BMX, not as good as Tony Hawk Pro Skater or going out and riding your bike.



Tennis Masters Series

Better than an acid bathbut not much By Robert Coffey

BERRITT Microids CADO www.microids.com COLUMN Everyone **601 534.99**

ESSENTING Pentium II 350, 64MB RAM, 16MB 30 card, SOOMB hard drive space ECONOMIST PROPERTY. Pentium III 800. 128MB RAM, 64MB 3D card, a deep and pervasive sense of self-toathing HEATER DISSESSEE LAN (2-4 players)



s a nation, we really should set aside some time to consider seriously the

consequences associated with cloning. How can we trust science not to produce hordes of hideous freaks when an entire team of programmers falls so utterly to merely duplicate the success of another game, in this case the Dreamcast's outstanding Virtua Tennis?

Tennis Masters Series is no Virtua Tennis-it ain't even Pong. Sure, it has loads of snazzy graphic features like persistent footprints on clay courts and



some of the frustration caused by the leusy centrals.

If real tennis were this consistently unpleasant, Wimbledon would have switched to badminton decades ago.

nice shadow effects, but all they do is slow the game down to a braintwisting crawl. I shut off virtually every advanced feature, lowered my resolution, and stripped down the textures in order to make the game remotely playable on my high-end system. Even then the players moved as if shod in cement blocks. And no thanks are due to the sjuggish controls that absolutely robbed me of any sense of where my avatar physically was on the court-not a big problem if winning

isn't a goal, but I'm a little more ambitious than that. You could aroue that Tennis Masters Series has greater realism than other tennis names, but if real tennis were as consistently unpleasant, Wimbledon would have switched to badminton decades ago. It all adds up to a thuddingly relentless. exercise in frustration and aggravation, completely devoid of the strategy. depth, and-most crucial-fun of the faster paced and less self-importantly realistic console game.



VERDICT ANDROSOS The best way to enjoy this game is trading it in for credit toward a Dreamcast and a copy of Virtue Tennis.



Road to India

Paved with good intentions but little else By Arcadian Del Sol

NEWST Merolds STABILITY TITLES Interactive GNUCL CHILD'S Everyone: violence 783, \$34.99

maral Mats. Perdinant fil 266, 32MB RAM, 8MB Direct 3D-compatible El arminentes card Michigan when be about he had Pertium 0.350. SANIO PEN

ndia is still a place fueled by ancient mysteries set in a stunning landscape. It is the perfect setting for adventure and intrigue. Yet we have waited far too long for an adventure game that takes advantage of all India has to offer. Credit Microlds' Road to India for rediscovering this rich landscape. If only they had rediscovered how to make a good adventure game.

Road to India begins with what is possibly the greatest achievement in bad timing in the history of computer gaming, A turban-sporting stranger drops off a briefcase somewhere in New Delhi, In an instant, half a city block is rubble. Flash forward to an airport, where protagonist Fred Reynolds sends his francé off to visit her family in New Dethi. Flash forward again (hang on, we're only getting started) to Fred's apartment door, where he is

de ivered à Dear John letter from said francé. Flash forward for the third time in four minutes, and Fred is on a plane bound for India and slips into a deep sleep. At first, this seems perfectly natural. New York to New Delhi .s a long flight. You proceed to spend the majority of the game in Fred's dreams. He gets knocked over the head so many times, it almost qualifies as a drinking game.

After watching too many introductory cut-scenes, you are finally reminded that this is an adventure game: A tite puzzle hovers menacingly in front of a swanky Bengali hideaway. Tile puzzles can be irritating and frustrating, 50 imagine playing one with pieces missing, Fortunately for those with a low tolerance for artificially difficult puzzles, this teaser represents the sole hurdle to completing



flx this, Microlds removed some of the pieces.

Road to India. The plot drags you along puzzle by puzzle while teiling a refreshingly mature story. Unfortunately, it tells it to you as if you were 7. To call this game short would be like cading the Bay of Bengal moist. It's shorter than most game demos. It is shorter than most game installations. It is shorter than this review!

At least this road to nowhere is

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EARLY CHILDHOOD RATING: Deemed Suitable For Children 3
Or Older. Products Carrying This Label Have Absolutely No
Material That Would Be Considered Inappropriate By Parents.



EVERYONE RATING: The E Replaced The Previous K-A Rating Last Year. Suitable For Kids Ages 6 And Up, E-Rated Games May Contain Minimal Violence Or Crude Language.



TEEN RATING: Contains Suggestive Themes, Mild Or Strong Language And Animated Violence. Some Parents May Want To Supervise Children Playing T-Rated Games.



MATURE RATING: These Games Contain More Adult Themes, Such As Blood And Gore, Stronger Language And Sexual Themes. Deemed Not Suitable For Those Under 17.



ADULTS ONLY RATING: The Extreme Of The Ratings, Suitable For Adults Only. Packs Sexual Themes And Extreme Violence. Console Manufacturers Have Yet To Allow An AO-Rated Game.











Gamer's Edge

Helping you suck less Edited by Interry senven



INDEPENDENCE WAR 2: GE OF CHAOS

DESIGNER TIPS



INDEPENDENCE WAR 2: EDGE OF CHAOS

Shoot your way past the end of Act 2 with developer help. PAGE 122



Dirty Tricks and tips for Failout Tactics, p.us Easter eggs on the Godlather DVD.

OPERATION FLASHPOINT: COLD WAR CHISTS

Pummel those Reds, Rambo-style. PAGE 126

COMMANDOS 2:

Prima and CGW team up for a walkthrough of one of the hardest levels, Das Boot, Silent Killer PAGE 128

PLUS: COMMAND & CONQUER: YURFS REVENGE PAGE 133, and RAILS ACROSS AMERICA PAGE 135



DESIGNER TIPS INDEPENDENCE WAR AT LE EDGE OF CHAOS Shoot your way past in mental and the state of the state

ere's a walkthrough for the final part of Act 2 is particularly difficult

mission), written as a narrative from the point of view of the game's hero, Cel Johnston. While it contains a mutiltude of compattactics that will help you throughout the game, it also contains major plot spollers for a section part of the way through the game.

Now here's an excerpt from the interview with "Captain" Cal .
Johnston, recorded from the official inquiry into the recent events.
BEGIN TRANSCRIPT

Tracking the Marauders
Interviewer: Tell me, Mr. Jehnsten,
what exactly happened after you
had managed to drive the
Marauders out of the Mwari
System?

Cel. Johnston: We'd built a huge alliance and had struck a blow against the Marauders. The trouble was that we still didn't know where they were comfining from, and they were continuing to attack all over the cluster.

Then I remembered the tracking device we got with the Advanced Patcom. If we used that to follow some Marauders when they jumped out-system, we could find their base of operations.

We traveled to the Firefrost system (even if they weren't from there, it looked like they may have used it as a route to the rest of the cluster) and found a group of Marauders attacking a freighter. destroyed all but one Marauder and followed him across the system to a Lagrange-Point. As he flew through each successive L-Point, i targeted him to find out where he was going

His ended up at an uncharted II-Point near Dain-II; the fact that it didn't appear on our charts was very suspicious, so we jumped through. When we got there, we were disappointed—II focked deserted. There was a whole load of junk and debris and net much eise. Then we spotted the incoming ships

We hid in the junk and watched them approach. It was a group of Merauders and a freighten They headed into the L-Point, and the tracker said they'd gone to another uncharted L-Point; Dain-I.

We followed the freighter and tracked it to its destination, which turned out to be a Mersuder asteroid base. Patrois were every where, but by keeping close to the inbound freighter, we managed to sneak in to their freight yard some supply vessels were going to the L-Point, and we followed them there.

They entered the L-Foint and we were surprised to find they'd jumped to Dante, a system that had long been abandoned, We headed streight back to base with this vital information.

Scouting the Marauder System interviewer: 50, you'd discovered the secret Marauder, system, Dante What happened next?

Cel Johnston: Shortly after we got back, Franklyn Hoffer, the leader of our cause, sent us information on Dante, it was a binary system and had been abandone to O years ago due to a stellar explosion. The L-Point links were no longer functioning due to the radiation, and traval to the system had been thought impossible. But this L-Point obviously was now usable, se the radiation must have dropped to safe levels.

There was also enother to Peint near the center of the system, which could be used as a back door a way to attack the Marauders without them knowing we were coming. We didn't know where it led to or if it was even usable.

Hoffer ordered us to scout the system, find the Marauder bases, and locate the back door L-Point,

We took our smallest, stealthlest ship, the Command Section, and hid it in a sargo ped on a Marauder Megatransporter. The Marauders were filding caches of supplies everywhere, so this wasn't too muchof a problem, though it was darn scary being locked up in the dark for hours.

But the really scary thing was that we had no way back on our own, as the Command Section couldn't capsule-jump. Hoffer said he'd send a ship to retrieve us once we'd transmitted a retrieval code. That wasn't very reassuring.

Wa arrived in the Dante system and waited for the freighter's escorts to leave before sneaking off. According to our data, the other L-Point was located near the planet Faust, so we headed toward the



When you run leto these comm relays, don't temper with



Den't get too close to this massive station-it's the



L-Point location. When we got closer, it became clear that the L-Point was usable and led to the Hoffer's Wake system. We had our back door!

Then we had our first problem. There was too much interference to transmit a retrieval signal. Without a way to transmit out, we were stuck in a hostile system. The only possibility was to scout the system for a solution.

We scanned around, and picked up transmissions from six sources. At least one or two of these could be bases, so we decided to investigate. The first turned out to be a commission, we didn't dare touch it—tampering could have alerted the Marauders.

We moved on to the next signal, which turned out to be something much more interesting. It was a big station—it had to be the Marauder headquarters!

There were dozens of ships on patrol, We had to be careful to stay at least 5 kilometers from any ships, otherwise they'd detect us. While scouting, we spotted something usefull a spare antenna array near the station. The trouble was that we couldn't get near it without being detected.

We moved onto the next signal. This turned out to be another relay, as did the next one.

The fifth signal was another Marauder station, a cargo yard. We noticed a set of field generator cargo pods, which could help boost our signal. A group of craft were inspecting the pods, so we waited for them to move away before docking to a pod and "borrowing" a field generator. We headed back to the L-Point to transmit again.

That's where we encountered our next problem: The field generator boosted the signal, but not enough. We needed the HQ antenna but couldn't figure out how to get it.

We decided to visit the last signal, hoping that we might get lucky. We did

The signal led us to a huge shipyard with a cruiser in dry dock. How the heck the Marauders got a cruiser, 1 don't know, but it would cause us a lot of trouble later when we assaulted the system

We noticed some maintenance fitters near the base and realized they would probably have the correct authorization to get near the HO and retrieve the antenna. We docked to one and lound the controls were locked out, but with a bit of technical wizardry, we managed to activate its remote link.

We lowed the filter to the HQ, and remotepiloted it to retrieve the antenna. We docked to the antenna and returned to the L-Point to retransmit our signal.

With both the antenna and field generator on board, we succeeded, Shortly afterward a corvette arrived to terry us home.

Assaulting the Marauder Bases

Interviewer: What did you do after scouting the Marauder system?

Cal Johnston: When we got back, we found that Hoffer had already made plans to assault the Marauder bases. We took our best ship and met Hoffer at the Dante back door L-Point. His likel was assaulting the three Marauder bases, so he asked us to help out and assigned us some wingmen.

We first decided to assault the Marauder HO. Our fleet there was getting pounded by six gunstar weapons platforms stationed around the base. The gunstars were also shielding the base, preventing us attacking it

We found that the base was controlling the gunstars and that by targeting the station, our active sensors would jam them and take them offline. We had to keep close to the station to do this, and we had to dodge a lot of enemy fire, While keeping the base targeted, we used manual aiming to destroy the gunstars.

It was tricky but we did it. With the last gunstar destroyed, the base shield went down, and we utterly destroyed the base. Chalk up one for the good guys.





We then traveled to the Cargo Yard. One of our Destroyers was attempting to destroy the base, but their main beam was damaged and taking time to charge. They needed our help keeping the Marauders off their back.

We had our hands full with taking out the attacking Marauder ships when the cargo pods around the station started powering up—they contained ships! Using remote missiles, I managed to destroy most of the pods before they could launch their deadly cargo, and bought enough time for the Destroyer to kill the station with its culting beam.

The final base, the Shipyard, proved tricky. The cruiser was still docked, but it had been modified with disruptor field generators—enough to disable an entire fleet...and the fleid was charging

The cruiser was connected to the dry dock by two umbilicals. If we destroyed those, perhaps we could stop the disruptor field charging. I used a cutting beam to slice off the umbilicals. Disconnecting the power must have caused a catastrophic fature in the station, and it exploded, freeing the cruiser from the dock. I then realized the field was stid charging, though slower than before. I attacked the cruiser, and managed to take it out before the disrupters discharged.

A message from Hoffer came in: The Marauders were defeated. We were to return to the Interstellar L-Point, and rendezvous with the fleet there. We headed out and were greeted with a magnificent sight; our entire leet arranged before the L-Point. Suddenly the L-Point sensors went wild-in jumped dozens of Marauder ships, accompanied by cruisers and the biggest capital ship I've ever seen. We were in serious trouble...

Interviewer: I think we'll take a recess here, Mr. Johnston.

END TRANSCRIPT

Stephen Robertson is a designer for Independence War 2: Edge of Chaos.

Dirtiest Trick o' the Month



ikes, crisis last month! Apparently, the Dirty Trick for last month (UO) is so dirty and low

that it's a bannable offense. As in, if you're caught, you're permanently banned from UO and the other EA online games, Here's hoping the savvier readers know what they were getting into...

Anyhow, moving on to a more current game, and one we still like, this month's winning bit of advice helps you screw over someone in Fallout Tactics.

Soloing the Demogorgon in BGH TOB

I was looking for a chailenge, so I decided to solo the Demogorgon with my level 27 Sorcerer and then my Conjurer/C eric. The key to this fight is to concentrate on Demogorgon himself. First, here are a couple things you should keep in mind:

- I. He is immune to Timestop, but that does not mean his minions are.
- 2. He is immune to lower resistance, but not the effects of Pierce Magic.

Things you should have.

- Rod of Resurrection; Why resurrect If you have only one character? The Rod will also heal you completely.
- 2. Anything that gives Charm protection, to protect yourself from his Charm.
- Lots of scrolls: Back up spells that you don't choose to memorize.

For the attack itself:

I Cast Spell Immunity: Use Abjuration, Stoneskin, Protection From Magical Weapons, Summon Planetar, and Morkain's Swords. (Use Simulacrums and Mislead to summon more Planetars.)

- 2. Task to him and start the fight.
- Get all of your summoned creatures to altack Demogorgon as you cast Improved Alacrity.
- Cast Pierce Magic four times on Demogorgon to lower his magic resistance to almost zero.
- Cast Implosion on Demogorgon if you're a Cleric or Conjurer, or Abi-Daizim's Horrid Willing

Here are couple tricks for Fallout Tactics. First make someone and give them really high Traps, Sneak, and Big Guns skills. Then equip them with a bunch of mines, remote traps, and anything else that explodes, Put the mines and a remote trap in a place where you think someone will come, and have your person sneak near it. When the other player walks near and tries to disarm the mines, detonate the remote trap, which should take out the mines and your victim. Another way to do this trick is to have your person stay nearby (on a rooftop or some



thing) with a bazooka. Shoot the mines or a person when they're near the mines. Another trick I like: Give your person plastic explosives and sneak somewhere, then set the timer for five or ten seconds and run near your target. Boom! That will kill your person almost certainty, but it will also kill the other player.

You can also give your player some nasty foods like yellow nuka-cola and stinky meal platter. If you can get close enough to use them on the other player, you'll polson your victim. That one is not recommended, though, if you're in a map with vehicles, drive over the other players with Deathclaws or Super Mutants in the car, because they can kick and gore while they're in it: -Conai "CoKane" O'Kane

And with that, Conel snags himself a copy of the Fellout elum's game, Arcanum. We still need tricks for newer and different games (we will consider Red Alert 2 tricks only for the Yurl's Revenge expansion).

if you're a Sorcerer. Both will hurt him enough to make Injured status.

- By now, most of your creatures are almost dead-use Comet and Dragon's Breath to push Demogorgon to Badly Injured.
- 7. Resummon a Planetar If it's not dead, then cast more offensive spelis.
- B. Cast Black Brade of Disaster, Improved Haste, Protection from Magical Weapons, and Tensor's Transformation to finish him off.

Note: Demogorgon has 90 percent magic resistance, 100 percent resistance to fire and cold, and 50 percent resistance to magic damage. -Tommy Chan

Falling Out for Burgains

Here's a trick for the single-player missions to get great Bartering skills for buying low and

selling high without using up those precious. Skill points and Perks.

When you first obtain Mother (the Deathclaw) abstain from using her in your team. Instead, let her sit unrecruited in the roster and go about your missions. You will find that as you pain Experience, Skill points, and Perks, so does Mother! All the other characters on the unre cruited roster gain only Experience. I like using Mother's Skill points to increase her Barter skill, and when she does eventually gain a new Perk. give her the Nepotiator Perk, You will find that with Barter at more than 100 percent, you will be able to buy anything at substantially lower prices and sell at substantially higher prices. This is a good way to work around the gooly supply system in the game, and it works even in the recent 1.27 patch. -Charlie Chen

Easter Eggs

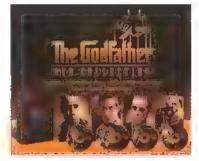
DVD: THE GODFATHER COLLECTION



aramount Home Video has hidden a lew great features on the uberrelease of Francis Ford Coppola's classic The

Godlather sega. On the Bonus Materials disc, go to Set Up. When you get to that submenu, press the right arrow key on your remote control. This will highlight a globe in the background, which gives you access to a collage of clips from various language versions of the film including Italian, German, and English Another good hidden feature can be found on the same disc. From the main menu, go to Gaileries and then select DVD Credits. Here, keep following the next arrow at the

bottom of the screen all the way to the end, and you'll get to see an HBO family from Jersey trying to watch the Corleones. Finally, go to the Family Tree section and select Sonny, which takes you to the family tree of Santino Corleone. From here, select Sonny again, and you will be taken to his biography. Press the left arrow key on your remote control and James Caan's face should be highlighted, press Enter, This brings up Caan's own biography. Now (last step), press the left arrow key once again to highlight his portrait on the left side, and if you press Enter again, you'll see Caan's screen test for his part as Sonny.



Operation Flashpoint: Cold War Crisis

Pummel those Reds, Rambo-style By Raphael Liberatore



t ease, soldiers. Place your wear pons on safety, open your MREs and chow down, because I want you relaxed for this briefing,

By now, you've experienced the tenacity of the formidable Russian enemy during Operation Flashpoint. Many of our good soldiers have been shipped home in body bags because of their overwhelming firepower. So, listen up as I describe the best operational tactics and team security for a couple of your toughest missions. Sit back, smoke 'em if you got, em, and pay close attention to my mollo: Practice doesn't make perfect. Perfect practice makes perfect.

Ranger Training

Operation Flashpoint is not Counter-Strike. You can't go racing across maps and moving down the enemy without utilizing tried-and-true combat principles. The enemy is too well trained and can hit you from a distance; therefore, fire, concea ment, movement, and cover become extremely important tools for achieving the objectives. Cover, for instance, can be just as important as a well-placed shot. Objects such as buildings, trees, vehicles, and brush offer great. cover and will increase your chances of survival. When firing remain in a prone or low crawl. position near tokage or behind objects. Move soldiers into position by peeking from around the brush or object. Always survey the countryside with your zoom feature or binoculars. Shoot only when the target is in fulview, Bottom line: Use as much cover as possible. And don't fall asleep, because in some s tuations you must move fast. Hit the Shift key and move like crazy away from tanks or BMPotherwise, the enemy will blast you into eternity.

Ground Zoro

There's no cookie-cutter recipe for completing OF missions. Use your judgment and keep surveying the terrain for enemy troops. Some missions provide vehicles, but that doesn't mean you need to operate them for success.

Shooting enemies at a distance, especially di they are moving, can get frustrating. Use the right mouse zoom key and try leading them. with your sights before firing. Just aim slightly ahead of them and bre four or five rounds in quick succession. Since recor is a factor



extra LAW ammo.



with most weapons, use semiauto or burst modes for distant targets and save full auto for very close ranges. Avoid the M60 on missions when you need to bring a LAW rocket along;

you can't take both due to encumbrance issues, and the recoil from the M60 makes. shooting at long ranges more difficult. Keep an eye on your magazines, and reload only when

Multiple Casualties

Playing multiplayer in Operation Flashpoint requires strategic planning and teamwork before the action starts. Before the game, plan in detail your strategy based on the objectives at hand. Also, consider each teammate's role. Examine the map and decide who goes where and at which grid coordinates for insertion and deployment. Use the notation feature to mark these points for future reference and for gauging your progress during the mission, Realtime communication is essential, whether it is on the phone locally with your friends or using an online voice chat program like Roger

Wilco. Squad leader commands take time to learn, so keep them simple. During the mission, inform team members of your location and the actions you are performing. When firing, communicate what you are doing. It is plenty trustrating to hear gunlire and not know if it's loe. When reaching key objectives or locations, advise your team so they are always aware of their situation. When missions require more than one objective, split your team into two or more groups with each team taking separate objectives. Just as in real combat, there is a considerable amount of planning involved before the actual combat. Stay alert, stay alive.

you get down to your last two rounds.

The sniper rifle is very effective outdoors. Sniper rifle factics are best employed when ordering your teammates to move into the vicinity of enemy positions. A LAW rocket launcher comes in handy against vehicles like the BMP or Shifka However, a T55 tank needs two LAW shots to take it out. After the first shot, your position becomes compromised. So fire, then move while reloading, and then fire again. Explosives such as hand grenades and satchet charges do come in handy, so load up if you can. Plant satchet charges in highly traversed areas such as roads or bridges, and make sure to move far away from the blast radius.

The Buddy System

At times, your squad won't respond well in combat situations without constant direction. If your squad is having a difficult time engaging the enemy, have them sit back and scan the horizon while you hunt for the enemy yourself. Formations do work, so use them. Command your squad to attack specific targets as they appear, while providing cover. Take advantage of team firepower by keeping your team in formation. If you must separate, it's best to assign two soldiers to a single task, like taking out an enemy tank, for instance.

When running low on ammo during the mission, replace your weapons and ammo with dead soldiers' equipment. In certain missions,



locate ammo crates scattered around enemy bases. Also order your squad members to take enemy weapons and ammo whenever necessary. Use the overhead map and compass at regular intervals during the mission. The overhead map highlights objectives through grid coordinates. It's also great for ascertaining vital information and waypoints. Overhead maps also

pinpoint the opt mum routes for a particular lown, objective, or mission area.

Some missions assign a medic to your team, if you or your teammates are wounded, use the medic to healthem. You can heal teammates by selecting them with the Fikey and then going into Action (7) and selecting the Golto Medic option.

NOW FOR THE HARD PART

Here's some advice for getting through the toughest missions, so saddle up, and lock and load-it's time for heroics

SHABOW MILLS (Single Piayer)

Single Player)

SITREP: As the single operative, your objective is to sneak into the town of Dourdan and destroy the fuel dump there, then destroy the fuel convoy coming from Latrinité heading to Houdan. After completing both objectives, find a car along the outskirts of town and escape to safety. You have seven minutes to complete this mission once the fuel dump sentries have been eliminated.

OPORD: Begin 300 meters southwest or Dourdan. Run southwest along the tree line, keeping a safe distance of 200 meters from the town. By running, you'll avoid a patrolling tank in the vicinity. Move 150 meters east of Dourdan, and then head north in stealth mode until you are adjacent to the fuel dump, about 60 meters east.

fuel dump, about 60 meters east.

Take out the two enemy sentries guarding the fuel station. This will raise the oldern Move quickly to the fuel depot, place a satchel charge, and then bolt toward your second objective. Check your overhead map. If you're unsure of your coordinates. Don't linger too long or you will have to face the tank. Zigzag to avoid the tank firing at you.

Once you reach your second objective, near the town of Le Trinité, the tank should be out of range. Blow the fuel dump. Now place two satchel charges on the road going from La Trinité and Dourdan. Move west 2001 meters, toward your escape vehicle. Use your binoculars to recon the road for the enemy fuel convoy. Detonate the satchels as the lest vehicle (a fuel truck) passes over them. Now run 400 meters southwest toward your getaway vehicle. Get in and drive to the town of Arudy in order to complete the mission. Remember, this is a timed mission, so don't take the scenic route during the drive home.

BTURN TO EDENH (CAMPA)

SITREP: Secure airport at the north of the island with an infantry assault. You will have seven soldiers at your disposal, along with two other teams in support, Bravo and Charlie.

OPORD: This mission starts out with a beach landing. Bravo team will cover your left flank, while Charlie supports your right. Your first objective is to rush the chapel on the hill at grid Dio3. Approach from the southwest: order your team members to Engage at Will. As you approach, the enemy will pop some smoke. If they don't, make sure you do in order to cover your approach.



Cleanse the hill of enemies, and then hold for the Soviet counterattack consisting of enemy troops and a T72 tank and BMP. Order your LAW soldiers to take out the vehicles while having the others take out enemy soldiers. Bravo and Charile teams will remain in support. Next, pick up an enemy RPG. Order your team to follow you 200 maters west, and then move stealthilly south in order to destroy the antiaircraft Shilka parked there. Have your LAW soldiers take it out or do it yourself. After it's eliminated, move northwest for cover and take out the nearby BMPs and enemy soldiers.

Order Bravo and Charile teams (after they give the ready signal) to assault the airport at grid location DhO8. Send them a signal, (O-O-1) to attack and then radio air support (Cobra gunships)—designation Novemberfor additional support (O-O-2). Use your binoculars and sweep the area for stray enemy soldiers. Order your teammates to lengage enemy soldiers, and then secure the airport.

Commandos 2

Prima Games gives up the goods with their walkthrough of Das Boot, Silent Killer



n this mission, you have control of the Diver, the Sapper, the Spy, and the Thief. The commandos are split into two groups-the first three start in a boat offshore while the Thief remains hidden under the bunks where you left him at the end of the Night of the Wolves mission. For most of the mission, you control the Sapper, Diver, and Spy Whiskey is also available and any of the four commandos can summon him.

FIG % Send the Diver, Sapper, and Spy into the

water. Swim them toward the landing area, taking note of where the solilary guard is looking-he slowly covers a 180 degree arc, so you can swim past when he's looking toward the rest of the base. Send the Sapper to knock out. the guard. Tie blm up and steal his uniform and rifle. Bring the rest of the team ashore.

FIG R: Using the Sapper's wirecutters, snip. through the first barbed-wire fence. Before you go through, press **b** to detect the mines that are hidden beyond it. There are four explosive charges arranged in a line across the section of fence you cut.

PIG 3: Defuse the mines and move on up the pathway. Pan the view to the technician working on a metal walkway in the facility beyond the wal. He'll spot you as you approach, as you'll be waving about a mine detector.

Monitor the vision of the technician and activate the Sapper's mine detector. There are two rows of mines hidden before the second barbed wire fence. Be careful when you're working in the middle of the path.

The technician might spot you, and there's also a German officer who's smoking in front of the compound. Wait, and he'll move from a position under the tree to walk in front of the guard tower, to the truck, and back again. Monitor his vision to see when you can safely defuse the mines and cut through the second

FIG 4: Sneak up to stand close to the guard tower. Lure the patrolling officer away with some cigarettes (the Diver has some). Knock out the officer and tie him up. Steal his

cigarettes and uniform. Give the officer's uniform to the Spy.

Now use the Spy (dressed in the officer's uniform) to distract the soldler patrolling outside the gate. Make him look away from the gates. Lure away the soldier standing in front of the gates and knock him out or kill him. Dump the body before returning to knock out and tie up the soldier who's still talk no to the Spy.

Use this space moment to select the Thief. Transfer the security papers from the last



FIG 1: Swim slowly up to the landing area right of the docks so the sentry doesn't apot you.



Primary Objectives Rescue all the Aliled sailors

- d the prison key
- Deactivate the underwater mines
- Open the hangar doo
- Escape in the submarine

Secondary Objectives

- Cut the barbed wire and deactivate
- Pass the security papers to the Spy
- Na Whiskeyi
 Enter the base disguised as an official
 Steal a vehicle
 Call the Green Beret using the radio
 Rescue the captain

- Destroy the torpedoes
- Find the Enioma code
- Destroy the AA guns
- Blow up the gas tanks

mission to Whiskey, Get the Spy or another character to summon the dog with the whishe. (The Thief may have to open the door to let him out.) When the dog arrives, give the security papers to the Spy to complete one of the minimission abjectives. Now zoom out the view using the hyphen key and study the layout of the base beyond the large gates.

FIG 52 Apart from the Spy dressed in the officer's uniform, don't send anybody else into the base yet. Distract soldler A on the raised platform-keep him looking away from the gates. Sneak in your Sapper while soldlers B and C aren't looking. Hide him around the back of the vellow tanks at D.

Let soldier spot the Sapper. Knock him out when he runs to investigate. Move the Spy to distract soldier C. Make him face away from soldier A, and use the Sapper to knock out soldier A

Send the Diver to kill soldier C with his throwing knife. Hide the body. Clear the rest of this area. Take out the sniper, E, on the balcony near the electrical station. Do this by hiding the Diver under the stairs and then using the Spy to talk to the Sniger.

Press # to distract the sniper and then press ■ to direct him down the steps-of you knock out the sniper on the balcony, soldlers beyond the wall will spot you. When the sniper gets to the bottom of the stairs, kill him with a throwing knife.

There's only one more quard in this area, F. and he blocks the way to the large building-the submarine pen. Lure him out of position with cigarettes and distract him (press #) with the Spy. Using another commando, creep up behind the guard and knock him out.

Send the Spy up the railroad track to where two more German soldiers are talking. Distract them so they look away from the gates. Send the Sapper and the Diver crawling toward the gates and then to the side of the large building. If you don't crawl here, you'll be spotted and the atarm will sound.

FIG 6: To rescue the trapped sub crew, you need to unlock their prison cell. A high-ranking German walking on the roof of the submarine pen has the all-Important key. There are eight enemies stationed on the roof. Check their positions by zooming out the game view (*).

Send the Spy up via the metal staircase and use him to distract the quard , patrolling nearby. Make him face away from the staircase and the nearby ladder. Mon for the vision of the key-holding fleutenant-he walks a long path across the roof and is dressed in gray. When he turns away, send the Diver up the ladder and kill guard A. Moye his body before the heutenant returns. Next, knife soldier B, whom the Spy is still distracting.

Turn your attention to guards C, D, and E. There's a path leading to a ledge at the front of the building, allowing you to sneak up on the quard with his back to the sea, C. Use the Diver to knife him. Send the Oiver along the path, up a small set of steps, and onto the roof to retrieve his weapon.

Guard D, on the opposite side, has his back to you. Sneak up when the lieutenant Isn't looking. Knife b and hide the body, Deal with the last



second set of mines difficult. Make sure he doesn't spot you.





FIG a: The best way into the submarine pen is via the deep at H. But you need to take out all of the quards and the patrolling lieutenant to make it.

soldier, II, on the edge of the building. This guy is a sniper, but he's facing the sea, so the Diver can easily knife him. Get the Spy to retrieve the knife-there's an eagle-eyed guard on the nearby roof.

One of the two remaining guards has his back to you. The other is an officer near # who will see through your disquise if you get too close.

To kill the fieutenant and grab the keys, lure him into the small passageway you used earlier, F. Like most sold ers, he's a sucker for free cigarettes. Use the Diver to knife him when he's close enough. Kil ing the lieutenant at F ensures that he dies beyond the range of the remaining officer.

Lure the last officer away from ₩ and kill him.

GAMER'S EDGE

Use O as a hiding place for this attack. You can now move all of your forces into the building. Send the Spy in first.

FIG 7: In the next room, kill or knock out the two technicians-they're unarmed. Send the Spydown the ladder and distract the sentry, a, walking along the edge of the submarine pen. Make sure he's facing away from soldier & by the ladder. Send down the Diver and lay him flat behind the crates. Attack soldier A and hide his body behind the crates.

Next, creep up behind the distracted guard B and kill him. Again hide the body, Be cautious here-you may have to deal with another soldier who follows you down the ladder. Be on the lookout for him and kill him quickly.

FIG 8: Maneuver the Spy so he distracts soldier b, who's patrolling beyond the small room at E. When his back is turned to sold er C. use the Diver to creep up and kill soldier C. Hide soldler &'s body, and then kill soldler . Again, hide the body. Search the bodies of the guards to pick up machine guns.

Look into the small room & Send in the Spy to distract the ione guard and then use the Diver to kill him. Search the wooden box here to find grenades, explosives, and a ladder. The switch here opens and closes the gates at the front of the base.

FIG 9: Leave E and note the quard on the steps watching over the empty dock. To successfully assassinate him, you must first distract the guard wandering along the second dock area, F. Use the Spy to turn the guard away from the soldier you want to kill so the attack remains unseen. Take the body and nide it in E.

Distract the guard in the corner of the room at the end of the far dock. Turn him away from your so diers and room E. When wandering guard **F** moves away, send in the Diver to kill the distracted guard. Remove the body before the wandering guard returns.

Send the Spy back to the dock next to the submarine. Move the Spy along the side of the dock opposite the submarine via 0, so you remain hidden from the guards on it.

Lure soldier I to point 6 using cigarettes, and then use the Spy to distract him so he turns his back to room E. Bring the Diver up (crawling). behind the distracted soldier 1 and stab him. Dump the body in room E. Next, kill soldier J and unlock the door he was quarding with the key you took from the lieutenant on the roof. Carry the body inside.

Inside is the crew of the captured sub. Hold down Shift and click on a crewman to until him Craw the Diver toward room & via G. Stay low to avoid the gaze of soldier **H** in the dry dock.

You now need to get rid of soldlers K, L, and M (See the earlier figure showing the area around the submarine,) Use the Diver to throw the knife and kill K-you can retrieve the knife later. Send the Spy along the edge of the submarine to distract soldier &. Kill him silently from behind. Send the Spy to distract soldier M. who watches over the sub from a position above the dock gates. When his back is turned, you can easily kill him,

Monitor the vision of soldier N, who guards the gangplank on the deck of the sub, Control the Spy and move him onto the sub and down to the body of soldier K. Pick up the body and hide it behind the conning tower. Retrieve the Diver's knite. Doing this allows you to lure so dier N onto the dock, ensuring that he isn't aterted to trouble by the dead body of a comrade. When the body has been moved, return to the dockside and attract the soldier N with a pack of cigarettes. Distract him so either the Diver or Sapper can sneak up behind him.

All this work leaves the fleutenant 0, who's guarding the door to the control room at the end of the dock. Lure him away from his position using cigarettes, and then use the Spy to distract bird after be picks them up. Kill or knock out the heutenant.

Do the same for soldier P on the high plat form. (See the figure showing the area around the submarine.) Lure him with cigarettes. distract him when he picks them up, and then use one of the other characters to attack from behind. This allows you to safety enter the goor previously guarded by lleutenant O.

In the room beyond, send the Spy to distract the officer when he's close to the lockers at the end of the room. Send in one of the other characters to knock out and tie up the soldier sitting on the bench. Then knock out the distracted officer.

Search the lockers to find sleeping pills, wine, grenades, another knife, poison, binoculars, and a first aid kit. Next, send the Spy upstairs. Distract the soldier and turn him so his back is to the stairway. Bring up the Diver and punchthe distructed soldier. This alerts the other soldler here. Quickly floor him with a punch. Tie up both men. Check the locker in the corner for more wine, binoculars, and a ladder

The submarine's captain is being held in the next room. Unlock the door with the keys you found on the roof and free him. Clear out the men in the control room with a grenade. Search the box to find the Enigma codes and activate the switch in the corner to open the gates of the submarine pen. Leave the building with the captain.

FIG 10: Send the Spy into the sub via the forward hatch-the one closest to the panaplank. Distract the guard at the end of the first room. and then send one of the other characters down the ladder to knock out the other quard. Kill the distracted quard.

Work your way through the sub, distracting and disabling the enemy so diers. When the ower lever is clear, climb up to the conning lower, killing the guards there. Move the captain and his crew aboard. Deactivate the underwater mines outside and the sub will be ready to leave.

Equip the Diver's diving gear (D) and jump nto the water, Swim through the open doors and into the sea beyond. Dive (press B) and go to each of the six mines in turn. Hold down Shift and click on each mine to defuse it.

FIG 11: Now for the secondary objectives. Clear out the rest of the enemy soldiers in the submarine pen. Send the Spy into the dry dock via the ladder at B. Distract soldier A so he's not facing the other soldier working at the dock. Send the Diver or the Sapper to knock out and tie up the wandering worker. Afterward, knock



kill the seidler at A. The Distract and Disable tactic works wonders in this section.



FÍG 8: Distract quare D so you can safely kill soldler C. After you clear room E, you can use It to hide the bodies.



out or kill the distracted guard. Return the way you came. Now turn your attention to guard C. Use the Spy to distract him at the end of his patrol route near point D, and then knock him out or kill him.

Follow the dack to get soldier & Keep going to distract and disable soldier F. Double back and head for soldler G. Distract and disable him. Wait until soldier I walks away from the building and the remaining guards at H.

Lure one of two guards away from H using cigarettes and use the Spy to distract him when he picks them up. When soldler I isn't looking. knock out or kill the lured guard and hide his body at point G. Lure soldier I down in the same way. The remaining guard at H should have his back to you and won't see your fist coming

The submarine pen is now clear. You've probably noticed lots of little metal boxes lying. around-only the Thief can open them. To bring him over, send a German uniform to the Thief via Whiskey. Send the Spy to the Thief's location at A. Use the Spy to distract the sold or standing outside the Thief's door.

When the coast is clear, move the Thief (now wearing the German uniform) through the door. Walk, don't run. Move the Spy outside Use the





Spy to distract the guard at **B** who's rooking toward point **C**. This allows the Thiel to move from **A**, behind the soldier at **B**, and to **C** without alerting any of the guards.

By the time you reach point **C**, the uniform will have been "used"—its effects are only temporary on most characters. Send another uniform to the Thief via Whiskey. Meanwhile, use the Spy to distract the guard at point **D** and make him look away from the double doors at **E**.

Move the Thief (now wearing the fresh uniform) to point E and into the submarine pen. Unlock the various metal boxes to find a bazooka, flamethrower, grenades, and a remote-controlled bomb.

Send the Spy to open the other set of submarine pen doors—the switch is in the building at the end of the far dock. Next, send the Spy to deal with the two guards patrolling the front of the building where the torpedo is located. Lure the guard to the left of the building using cigarettes. Place them in point A so you can avoid the gaze of other soldiers. After you ture the soldier away, knock him out using the syringe—two doses ought to send him to the floor. Tie him up and use the syringe on the other guard.

Now your team can swim out of the submarine pen doors and climb the steps at the front of the building. You won't get very far outside if you didn't deal with the sniper on the roof earlier. (See F.G. 6. which shows the roof of the submarine pen.) If you didn't, you'd better do it now.

Send the Spy into the building first and distract and disable the first guard there. Use this tactic to get rid of the technicians. In most cases, even if one of the unarmed enemies here spots you, he won't raise the general alarm. There's a bonus photo piece in one of the cupboards here. Plant the remote-controlled bomb you picked up earlier next to the torpedo and leave.

When you're in the submarine pen, detonate the torpedo charge, it destroys the torpedo and demolishes the entire building.

You need to do a little preparation for the remaining secondary objectives—the destruction of the yellow gas tanks and the three AA guns.

Take control of the Spy and visit locations A, B, and C. At A, enter the but and turn off the electrified fence—do this without being seen, or you'll blow your cover.

Move to **B** and search the furniture to find a remote-controlled bomb, timed bomb, and grenades. The radio is also in this building. Use it discreetly. It allows you to specify a landing point for the Green Beret-he can parachute in if you need him. Find more explosives in the building at **C**.

Move the other squad members out through the submarine doors (next to the sub) and around through the entrance they used at the beginning of the mission. Make sure that you've already taken out the sniper on the balcony—you're going to approach the first AA gun via the power station. Cut the wire fence when the technician works on the first right side generator. (See FIG 10.) Walk to the technician and knock him out. The him up and search him to find another remotecontrolled bomb.

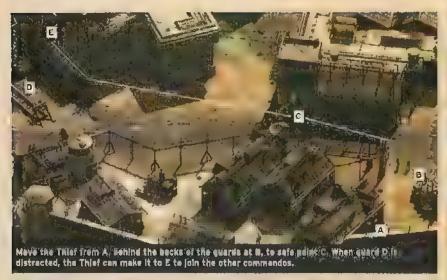
Next, use the Spy to distract one of the two soldiers guarding the power station gate. Distract the one patrolling between the AA gun and the electricity substations.

Move the Sapper through the substations and cut the wire behind the sentry outside the gate. Knock out the guard, the him up, and carry away his body. Move the Sapper up to knock out the guard distracted by the Spy. The him up and carry away the body. Use the Spy to distract the soldier on the wall, and use the Sapper to plant a remote-controlled bomb next to the AA gun, Do the same for the AA gun on the wall—watch for soldiers patrolling beyond the wall.

Move the Sapper and the Spy to the large veilow tanks near the entrance to the base. Plant a limed bomb next to the lanks, Leave the compound quickly and head around the edge of the base (past the mines) toward the front of the submarine pen. Detonate the other remote-controlled bombs. Scroll across the map to view your handlwork.

One AA gun remains. Send the Spy to the watchtower beside the other beach. Use the syringe to disable the guard looking out over the sea and the him up. Move to the level below the one you just dealt with and restrict that guard's view of the water. Swim your squad from the submarine pen around the tower to the other beach.

Use the Sapper to cut the wire fence and check for mines beyond it—there is a row across







the beach. Crawl diagonally up the beach using the rocks for cover. Don't approach the wire vet-there are more mines in front of at.

To give yourself time to find and defuse the mines, send the Spy to distract the soldler

patrolling the fence. When he's done so, send the Sapper through to knock out and tie up the distracted guard

Now send the Spy to the bunker shead and distract the guard there-don't let him look



The switch at A turns the electric fencing off at the power station. More explosives are at

loward the beach. Crawl through the trees and knock out the officer standing by the car. When the Spy gets in the car with the security papers (which allow him to drive into the base), the minioblective is completed.

Now, to destroy the last AA gun, return to the beach. The Spy must distract the guard on the watchtower located opposite building A-2, Doing so a lows the Sapper to defuse the mines close to the wall of the base. Use the Diver's grappling hook (or the Thief and the ladder) to climb the wall, allowing the Sapper to plant the final charge next to the gun.

With a fimed bomb, you have 20 seconds to run away. When the gun explodes, soldlers come to investigate-so don't hang around. Swim to the submarine pen, jump in the sub, and escape.

You can find one bonus photo piece in the barracks, 6, opposite the Thief's original starting point. Two more can be found in the general's office (7.8), while another is located in a locker in the shower block (9). Slightly trickier, another bonus photo piece can be found in the subterranean bunker (10) near the large AA gun. The last bonus piece can be found in the small office (11) near the rear entrance of the base.

Mission Secret Bonus photo pieces required: 11

This bonus mission simply involves guiding your commando's motorboat around a race course. The course itself has been marked off with mines-If you bit one, your boat will explode. As the mission objectives point out, hitting any of the buoys that litter the course wid slow you down.

You need to complete the race course in less than three minutes to successfully complete this bonus mission, but it shouldn't pose a problem.

Command & Conquer: Yuri's Revenge

Tricks straight from Westwood's mind By Chris Rubyor



he Red Alert franchise is rife with bizarre units, fast gamep ay, and interesting unit strategies, It's no

wonder that the most popular game for Dirty Tricks by far is Red Alert 2. We at CGW decided to hit up a Westwood insider and have him give you the basic lowdown on how to dominate at any multiplayer game in Yuri's Revenge.

Yuri's Faction

Since Yuri's technology (psychlos, genetics) uses an opponent's strengths against him, brute force and tank rushes won't work like they used to. Yuri can mind-control enemy units and force them to do his dirty work. And there's no bigger dis than Yuri mind-controlling your Allied paratroopers or Soviet Tesla tanks and feeding them into a grinder to make money. Even worse one well-placed blast from his Genetic Mutator can turn a base defended by GIs and conscripts into a base overrun by hulking gray Brutes.

Makes playing as Yuri kinda fun, don't it? Here are some tips and strategies that might help you gain the minds of your loes a little faster

Make sure to pump out a good number of Siave Miners, Don't forget, these units function as combination resource-gathering and processing facilities.

Combinations of units are absolutely essential for winning with Yuri. Try a mix of Brutes, Gatling Tanks, and Lasher Tanks for siege attacks. Or swap the Brutes for a Mastermind, a pair of Magnetrons, and a flying saucer to raid bases for their units and cash.

Pump out a few Brutes at the beginning of the game to counter any early tank rushes by an opponent. A little later, you can supplement your defense with a few Psychic Towers to gain control of any marauding units.

Tank bunkers offer a great deal of protection, and they're cheap to build. If your enemy is keen on airborne assaults, order Gatling Tanks into your bunkers. You've got a devastating defense against land and air attacks, and the armor rating of the tank is upgraded.

If a player tries to overload your Mastermind unit, have the units that are being controlled attack the invading unit.

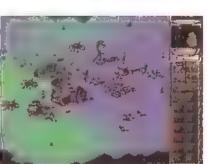
If you're playing against the Allies and Robot Tanks are advancing on your position, have a lew flying saucers handy. They can drain power, making the Robot Tanks go offline; your foes can neither move nor defend themselves then

Build a cloping valias soon as possible; you can double the production of your infantry units at no added cost.

Chaos Drones mean big trouble for your foes. These units deploy a hallucinogenic gas that causes enemy units to go berserk and attack their own. Alone, they're pretty defenseless, so mix in a few Lashers and Brutes for protection.

The Virus unit is best employed hidden behind buildings and underneath trees. After all, they're snipers, right? Engineers, conscripts, and GIs go to their great reward in a noxious cloud of green gas.







In Red Alert and Red Alert 2, the Soviets were all about slow moving, heavily armored units chock full of tirepower. In Yuri's Revenge, the basic Soviet style hasn't changed, but their arsenal now includes some lighter, faster units to help out against Yuri's forces. The Soviets also have Boris, a new nero unit, he's an infantryman with considerable firing range and the ability to call in MIG air strikes. He's also immune to mind control.

When attacking Yun, make sure you incorporate Terror Drones and Dogs Into your forces. They might be small, but they're immune to Yuri's psychic attacks and can destroy Yun clones and Mastermind units.

I playing as frag (in skirmish mode), fortify your base with battle bunkers and conscripts. Next, build four Desolators and deploy them evenly around your base

This works effectively against paratrooper drops and light rushes.

Keep your siege choppers on the outskirts of your opponent's base and slowly inch them in; they're easily destroyed by antiaircraft defenses. It's a so wise to use Terror Drones and flak trucks to protect deployed siege choppers.

When using Boris, make sure he's well hidden among trees, or placed on higher ground from his target. Your opponent won't know what hit him until it's too late.

Build your industrial plant as soon as possible; this structure is essential for building large forces to overrun your foe. A good Soviet base always has two war factories and one industrial plant.

Protect machine shops at all costs. They





regenerate all your vehicles' health to 100 percent, and thus are priceless.

Many of the skirmish maps in Yuri's Revenge have elevated terrain. An effective strategy is to lailed and deploy siege choppers on the plateaus and attack your enemy from above.

Allied Forens

Previously reliant on light, fast moving vehicles, the Alies now have some new units like the Battle Fortress that move a little more slowly but have vastly increased firepower. Tanya's been elevated to hero status, making her immune to mind control and giving her increased firing range and armor.

The new Guardian Glunits make short work of heavy armor with their uncrushable bunker and anti-tank bazooka. Use them in groups of three around your base for extra protection against both land and air attacks.

The best assault unit against a Yuri base is the Robot Tank. It can't be mind controlled, can travel across water, and can float across different elevations. But don't forget: They need power, and when their power supply is cut, they go offine and can't move or defend themselves. For added firepower, mix in a few Mirage Tanks.

Gap Generators are more precious than ever. Use them to avoid Yuri's mind attacks. The first one should always go next to your war factory.

If you've got Chrono Legionnaires, drop them in a Bathle Fortress for a potent attack combo. This setup can be used to whittle down any Soviet or Yuri force, but be careful—a Yuri clone can still use its mind powers to control it.

Chris Rubyor is the online community manager for the Red Alert 2 franchise.

COMPUTER GANG WORLD

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Rails Across America

Two capitalists lay down the track for success By Tom Chick and Bruce Geryk



he game; Rails Across America, The contenders: Tom Chick, Bruce Geryk, and three Al players, The parameters: random starting positions in 1890 and a 20-year limit Good Juck, gentlemen.

anuary 1890

Tom: Monterrey? Great (F)G 1), I'm start ng Chick Lines Ltd. in the middle of Mexico white Bruce is propped down on the Eastern Seaboard. At least he's got Vanderbilt and Harriman to dog his steps. Starting in a rural area like mine has its advantages; I'm pretty much guaranteed the "Viva Mexicol" bonus for connecting all Mexican cities. But I'll need to muscle in on the higher-traffic action for some income. As soon as I've got \$15 million to spare, I'll buy a short line to use as a stateside base of operations

Bruce Starting in Richmond (FIG 2) gives me easy access to the lucrative routes in the Northeast, it also makes the Gulf-to-Canada bonus a priority. The Northeast corridor routes don't cost much to build because the terrain is flat and the cities are close together. That means I'll have money left over for the many trains i'll need. And I should still be able to make an early jump into the Midwest to grab a part of any transcontinental lines that del buitt.

March 1892

Tom: It's slow going because my routes aren't providing much of an income. These long ra Iways across the frontier are expensive, so I have to watch spending carefully (FIG 3). One important tactic for early expansion in rural areas is to use influence cards to add resources in isolated cities. These can increase freight traffic and thus income. It takes only a few weak Labor cards, which are easy enough to get at the lowest Graft settings; the cards are also handy for Strikes.

Bruce I've jumped out to an early lead over Tom thanks to my Regional Dominance, Rail-Building, and superior Operating Ratio, Even so, I've been aggressive in taking out loans, especially when interest rates dip. It looks I ke no one has the stomach for influence attacks yet, so I've been selling cards for extra money

January 1896

Tons: I'm falling way behind in Prestige I missed my dividend payments this year, so I ost the Prestige bonus, It's important to keep an eye on the Special Finances screen for Projected Dividends. When December rolls around, make sure you have that amount to spare. Similarly, if you're paying Graft for Influence cards. remember your quarterly payments and mentally add this to the figure for Committed Income



Docember 1896

Bruce: I'm keeping the lead, but Harriman is giving me a run for my money by developing around Pittsburgh and upstate New York white I build along the coast. To slow him down, 'm going to build into his big traffic hubs, Pillsburgh and Creveland, Then I'll change my Attitude on the Politics screen to War. This rate war will slash both of our incomes in the cibes. where we connect, but it won't affect me at the big traffic hubs, where I don't have any competition. Since I have several lucrative cities all to myself, this should hurt him a lot more than 3 burts me.

February 1899

Tom: Although my Prest ge increase is keeping pace with the other guys', I'm way back in third place. My main problem is that it's hard to make money providing service to these backwater Mexican cities, It's time to grab a North American short ine, I've made a \$13 mill on offer on Clovis to Amarillo (FIG 4).

March 1899

Tom: "Rejected"? Those no-good so-and-sos (FIG 5). I even tried to bribe the board of directors, ngrates. Their lousy little line was worth only a couple of million anyway! Well, if that's the way they want to play, I've got a few cards up my sleeve. Namely Media Buzz, a Fund Raiser, and Mass Arrests, which are good enough to force as auction. Of course, before I do this, I'll make sure Bruce doesn't have the cash or credit to outbid me and keep me from getting a slice of the North American ple.

Bruce, I see Tom's jumped the national border and made it into the U.S. I didn't have the cash to drive the bidding process higher, so he got a line in Texas for only \$10 million, I had planned to take advantage of my profitable Northeast routes by running slightly older trains to reduce my expenditures, but with competition from Harriman, this would have simply shifted traffic to his competing lines. This is one of the reasons. why carving out an area where you can mainlain a monopoly is so important,

August 1899

Tom. So now I'm expanding from Texas to boost my income. In fact, I think I can make a bid for the first transcontinental line by moving west as well as east. My plans to connect Mexico will take a back seat for now.

September 1900

Bruce: Things are really heating up, I can no onger baby sit each track, so I'm adding managers to most of them (FIG 6). Their \$10,000 monthly salary is minimal compared. to my \$12 million monthly income. Since managers don't upgrade your track or engines though, I periodically go to the Track List and sort my tracks by Congestion. For any track over 110 percent, Lupgrade engines, signals, and track in that order. The manager will buy more engines to take advantage of the added capacity while I deal with other matters, like evaluating rival rail networks for weaknesses, I do this by checking the Regional Cargo section of the Annual Report to find regions where an apponent has only a slight edge over me. Hitting him with a Strike can shut him down for six months. I can follow this up with Sabotage or a Safety Inspection on his tracks that carry the most cars. By a so improving my own network, I can wrest control of that region and stear the Prestige from him

April 1902

Tom: Fisk just broke into Mexico by bidding on the Nogales-to-Mexicali shortline. This means the transcontinental connection will have to wait and I'll have to devote my resources to quickly connecting Mexico before he blocks me. I'm laying new track with triple crews, because if he locks me out of a single city, my Viva Mexico bonus is jost.

January 1903

Bruce: I'm connected from Albany to Montgomery. In the meantime, Harriman has connected a lot of cities in Pennsylvania and Ohio, so that avenue of expansion is out for me-building duplicate track is a waste of time at this point because I'll be competing for traffic. Better to build into Texas from my southern lines. Before I head west, though, I need to wrap up the 50 points for building Guif-to-Canada by connecting to Montreal and Mobile.

Tom Rats. Bruce got the Gulf-to-Canada connection, which will effectively offset the Prestige I'll get from uniting Mexico.

Mny 1903

Tom: I've connected Mexico and now I'm in second place with 314 Prestige to Bruce's 362. I'il need a transcontinental line to win. But those triple crews were expensive and my income is still too low to really commit to connecting those long barren stretches west of Texas. Time for a stock raid, perhaps? Harriman is sitting on \$80 million. But I don't recall him having made any Influence attacks lately, so he might have enough money and Dirty Tricks cards to defend himself. The tricky thing about a stock raid is that as soon as you grab the money, you've probably used the cards you need to defend yourse I from another stock raid. Plus, you've just advertised that you're defenseless and sifting on a wad of cash. So the best bet is to wait for another raider to move and then hit him while he's defenseless.

Bruce. My drawn-out fight in the Northeast sapped much of my cash, so I tried to get some by making a stock raid on Harriman. Unfortunately, Tom must have been watching the reports prefty carefully; he immediately hit me with a stock raid of his own. He made off with 40 percent of my money. This is really going to hurt, as I have some big loans coming due soon.

October 1905

Tom: With my ill-gotten gains, the transcontinental line is done and I managed to reap a Prestige bonus of 102, shooting me into first place with less than five years to go. My goal now is to defend myself from Strikes and investigations by hoarding Publicity cards for defense. As long as I keep my income flowing at a reasonable level, I should be quaranteed first place.

December 1910

Bruce: Tom has 638 Prestige; I have 567 Adding resources, a transcontinental Prestige award, a strategic shortline purchase, and a daring 18th hour stock raid helped Tom from a sorry starting position to a decisive victory (FIG 7 AND 8). This was a short game, in longer games, we would have had to deal with electrification, engines that go obsolete, and more careful use of Joans. But as far as I'm concerned, Tom hasn't heard the last of me.

QUICKTIPS: CIVILIZATION III



Ithough Civilizations I_i II_i and III share a lot of the same mechanics, there are some subtle and important differences in Civ III. The fundamentals of building your empire aren't the same anymore. Keep in mind the three

new Rs of Civ III; rivers, resources, and roads.

Rivers are no longer just a good place for an extra food icon. For a number of reasons, they're an indispensable site for new cities. Any city placed adjacent to a river won't need an aqueduct to grow larger than size 6. This saves you the 100 shields and the maintenance cost you would have paid for the aqueduct. Also, until you research electricity all irrigation must start at a river, so cities near rivers can flourish sooner. Note that you don't need to maintain a supply line of irrigated squares; once terrain is irrigated. It counts as irrigated even if its connection to the river is broken by pillaging you can even still dig new irrigation routes without restoring the connection to a river.







Rivers are also an important terrain feature in terms of combat. Historically, battles are often fought around rivers (most Civil War battles are named after the rivers where they were fought), and this should be the case in Civil as well. Being on the apposite bank of a river affords the same protection as being in forest or jungle (+25%). When you're holding off attackers, try to fortify belind a river to increase the defensive bonus to +50%. Note that these bonuses apply when you're attacking a city directly, so be careful about attacking across a river that borders a city, if you can't tell which way a river wends, use the Clear Mag command. Ctrl-Shift-M, which lets you see the terrain more clearly.

The second R is resources. These are obviously an important innovation in Civilliyou can't underestimate the importance of luxuries like gems, wine, and slik. Each
luxury resource makes one citizen happy in each of your cities (assuming the cities are
connected). A luxury resource is even better than a temple, which makes one citizen
content just in the city where it's built. Unlike temples, luxury resources don't have
production or maintenance costs. And unlike temples, you can use multiple luxury
resources to make your people even happier.

You'd enjoy an enormous advantage if you can bring luxury resources to your people early in the game when you're still struggling to build temples. Many luxuries occur in clusters. Since you need only one, the rest are ideal trade fodder (note that roads must be built to resources, even if they're within a city radius). In the world of Civ III, you could almost say that materialism (in the form of luxuries) is more important than religion (temples and cathedrals). But there's one important caveat: if you rely exclusively on luxuries and neglect religion, your culture rating will suffer.







And now for our third R: roads, Roads don't just provide the one-coin commerce bonus they used to. They also are vital for keeping resources flowing through your empire. Protect important crossroads and be careful not to leave long stretches of undefended road; the AI will find these and phlage them, cutting off the distant colonies or cities and interrupting the flow of luxuries and strategic resources. Cover

your territory in a web of roads so that if one is cut, you'l, have an alternate route. Because the Al doesn't get a movement bonus when traveling along your roads, you no longer have to worry about failing prey to your own transportation infrastructure.









In pursuit of the ultimate gaming system Edited by William O'Neal



The Ultimate E

What do you get when you give eight PC manufacturers a \$4,000 budget to come up with something that truly kicks ass? You get CGW's annual UGM story, that's what!

DOING CONTRACTOR OF THE PARTY O



Voodoo PC MonsoonEGAD-XP

t's that time of the year again. You know what we're talking about.

The time of the year that's loved by advertisers but dreaded by editors: the holiday season, if you're a longtime CGW reader, then you also know that our January issue means one thing to techtypes: The Ultimate Gaming Machine

This year we tried our best to learn from years past. And you can bet that this year's story was as much of a pain in the ass as every other one.

So we tried to simplify things. We told

every manufacturer the same thing: "Put together the best machine that you can for \$4,000 or less." While some companier (Vocabo PC).

Fa con Northwest, and A lenware) sent us machines at the top of the budget, other companies sent in machines that are below \$3,000. But we weren't surprised by

which machines wound up in the top three slots.

We also decided to keep the testing simple. We can three test suites. MadOnion's 3DMark2001, Zilf Davis's 3D WinBench 2000, and our very own 3D GameGauge 2.5. We then averaged the three scores to give each machine a final score, which is what determined the ultimate winner. Sure, some are gonna argue that this was unfair, but most of these machines kick some serious ass. And with the exception of maybe one or two, you'd be well off getting any of them. So sit back and enjoy.

By William O'Neal



Last year Falcon Northwest shared I the top slot with Alienware But this year, both of them were knocked off the throne. Shipping with Microsoft Windows XP Professional, the Falcon Mach √ is the only Athlon rig to boast SI2MB of PC2100 DDR memory, And the Mach V ships with components that will make any hardware junkle wet his pants: an AMD Athlon XP 1800+ (I.5GHz) processor, VisionTek's venerable XTASY 6964 GeForce3Ti 500 graphics card, a 21-inch Viewsonic P220F monitor Klipsch ProMedia 5.1 speakers, a SoundBlaster Audigy X-Gamer sound card, and 800B of hard disk space in a RAID array.

The Falcon machine was the first one we received—and therefore tested—so to set the bar by which all the others were benched. And that was some bar With Ouake III: Arena frame rates of 187 at 1024x768x16 and a 3DMark2001 score of 7918, no one can doubt that the boys up in Ashland know how to put together a machine. And considering Falcon's commitment to stability, we weren't surprised that our test machine never crashed, hung, or otherwise behaved strangely.

Rather than pinning their succession girmnicks, Falcon offers top-notch components and peripherals, like Microsoft's Natural Pro Keyboard and Optical Mouse EnerMax's 365-watt power supply, and a Ginabyte GA7DX motherboard

It was the benchmarks that put Falcon in second place. But it was the best performer of the Geforce3 machines, which left us wondering how it would have performed with the ATI Radeon 8500 that the winning Voodoo machine boasts.

vth 1 18th Falcon Northwest - www.

VERDICT **

Who knows? Had Falcon shipped their rig with an ATI Radaon, they might have snagged the top spot. But the Mach V is still a great machine.

Voodoo PC came in a pathetic sixth out of seven machines last year Apparently a tot can change in a year When the MonsoonEGAD XP showed up and we saw what those crazy, beerswilling, trockey-playing Canadians had put together, our Jaws dropped. This thing is easily the coolest-looking computer we've ever seen Of course our cynic sinkicked in-while we lauded the company for putting together a good-looking rig we were sure that this would be a case of form superceding function.

The Monsoon is the only machine to ship with an ATI Radeon 8500 graph cs. card. Apparently, in the spirit of the Canadian Corner, 'the Calgary-based company wanted to give the little country something to be proud of, it achieved a scant 177.2 frames per second in Quake III. Arena at 1024x768x16, and we began to think that going with the Radeon would result in the Monsoon getting its Canad air ass kicked. But there's more to testing a machine than playing Quake. The Monsoon beat the living crap out of the competition in Ziff Day s's 3D WinBerich 2000, scoring an unrivaled 280. The Monsoon was also the only rig to achieve a 3DMark2001 score in the 8000 range, bust ng out with a huge 8341.

The only real knock against the Monsoon was that our test machine shipped with Windows ME instead of Windows XP. But you can easily have them build a machine with XP. We also would have liked our machine to be equipped with a CD-RW. But neither of these haws could overshadow the Monsoon's superfast benchmark numbers and killer looks.

Being as obsessed with quality as the next guy, the Monsoon comes equipped with an ASUS A7V266 motherboard, a 22 inch NEC FEI250+ monitor, a IOOGB Western Digital hard drive, Klipsch ProMedia 5.1 speakers, a SoundBlaster Audigy X-Gamer sound card, a swank Pioneer trayless DVD-ROM drive, and Logitech's Cordless Freedom Optical keyboard.

VANIALIDAR Voodoo PC (White www.voodoops...com (Mit \$4,000)

VERDICIT AAAAA

This may be the raddest machine, we've ever tested. We were leary of the Radeon graphics card, but the numbers don't ils. Canada rocks.







Athlon based machines are the top three machines we tested. While none of the three scored the best Quake III: Arena Irame rates-the Dell Dimension 8200 won that battle-they achieved the three highest 3DMark200I scores.

The third-fastest Athlon XP machine. All enware's Aurora DDR is a smoker Sporting nearly the same components as the top two machines, the Aurora's performance comes as no surprise to us. Its 3DMark2001 score of 7899 is Just a hair below the Falcon's 7918. But Alienware overclocked their graphics card so it repeatedly hung while running 3DMark2001; I had to crank down the clack speed in order to complete the test. How ser ous an infraction this is

depends mainly on the user. We would trade a slightly lower Quake III framerate score or a few 3DMark2001 points for rock-solid stability.

As de from that, the Aurora DDR is a great machine, Like all Allenware rigs, it looks great, and its component list is nothing to sneeze at. The machine came equipped with Microsoft Windows XP. Klipsch ProMedia 5.Is. a Soundillaster Audigy, 256MB of PC2100 DDR memory, and 800B of storage in a RAID array. Not too shabby.

* Allenware (C . www.akenware.com MIL \$3,999

VERDICT NO.

The Aurora DDR is a solid performer, but the overclocked GPU caused problems. We'd sacrifice a few 3DMark2001 points for greater stability.

In spite of its competent components, Hypersonic PC's entry landed squarely in the middle of the pack. Based on Windows ME, the Sonic Boom 5.1 boasts a 2GHz Pentium 4 processor, 256MB of RDRAM, an ASUS P4T mother board, a really nice 19-inch NEC MultiSync monitor, Kipsch ProMedia 5.1s, dual 40GB IBM hard drives in a RAID configuration. and a SoundBlaster Audigy MP3+

The Sonic Boom's shortcomings are due to its having a Hercules 3D Prophet III GeForce3 card instead of the newer GeForce3Ti 500. And we would have preferred for the Sonic Boom 5,1 to come with Windows XP

But the Sonic Boom 5.1 still achieved Quake Jil: Arena frame rates of 192.5 at 1024x768x16, and its 3DMark2001 score of 7574 is nothing to short at, It was one of four machines to ship with an aiuminum CoolMaster case, and we're pleased to say that the Sonic Boom 5.1 is super stable and never crashed on us.

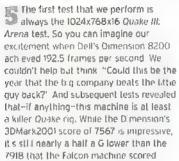
In a departure from the rest of the machines, the Sonic Booin 5.1 shipped with the Diamond Multimed a Rio Digital Audio Receiver, a cool device that streams digital audio from your computer to your entertainment system via ethernet cable or a standard telephone jack.

Hypersonic is definitely one of the premiere boutique gaming companies. and their UGM entry proves that. If you're partial to Hypersonic PC, then we're sure that you'll be pleased with the Sonic Boom S.I. Just be sure to get it configured with a GeForce3Ti 500 graph cs card and Windows XP.

II. C. III I Hypersonic PC (68 t. www. .hypersonic-gc.com +RD 93 999

VERDICT XXXXX

Sonic Boom 5.1 did show us good referred Windows XF, though.



Shipping with a proprietary motherboard, the Dell boasts a 2GHz Pentium 4 processor, 512MB of RDRAM, a Vision Fek XTASY 6964 (GeForce3Ti 500) graphics card, a 100GB Western Digital hard drive, and Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition. We releven fond of its Affec Lansing ADA490 speakers.

The Dell performed all tests flawlesslynever freezing or hanging-and we liked the intel Impuse 3.0 Explorer and must media keyboard. Last year's Dimension was a bitch to open up and work on, and it seems that Dell heard the complaints; this new Dimension is significantly easier to get into. Our only complaint is that you have to lie the machine on its side to open it. Which means that power users

cover off. But maybe this is for the better.

If you want a lop-notch rig and are reluctant to go to one of the little guys, then Del is by far your best option.

abilit falls Dellish all www.doil.com \$3.449

For those whe prefer to buy from a.

gress company, Dali is it. The

solid performer and very stable.

Dimension 8200 was both a rock-

VERDICT TO THE PARTY

like us can't use the machine with the

fustest machine we tested, we were pleased with the package that the company put together. A Microsoft Windows ME machine with 256MB of RDRAM, the Omega is based on the venerable ASUS P4T motherhoard. The only real knock against the GMactines DELL DIMENSION 8200 Omega is the components, which were at pest top-of-the-line Iwo months app: 1.8GHz Pent um 4, 64MB GeForce3. Windows ME and Klipsch ProMedia 4.1s. Swap these components for a 2GHz Penhum 4. GeForce3Ti 500, Windows XP and some Klipsch ProMed a 5.Is, and it's hard not to imagine the GMachines. 3DMark2001 score of 7313 going up to nearly 8000-and therefore being more competitive.

GMachines shipped their top-of-theline rig with a L8GHz Pentium 4

processor. While the Omega wasn't the

Considering how stacked this field of competitors is, we must explain that the Omega's sixth-place finish is not necessarily indicative of its overall power, in other words, this machine fl.es. With Quake III: Arena Trame rates of 186.5 at 1024x768x16 and Unreal Tournament frame rates of 64.74 at 1024x768x16, this thing should please anyone who uses it

Essentially, the GMachines Omega was beaten out because the top five compelitors were able to get the latest and greatest components closer to their release than the smaller GMachines. Also, the Windows ME installation that our test machine shipped with froze up on us a few times when we tried to install some of the networking components, but dealing with this problem was no harder than hilting the Cancel button.

With the exception of the key components of CPU, graphics card, and speakers, It's easy for us to recommend the GMachines Omega. Again, be sure to get your machine with either the ZGHz Pentium 4 or Athlon XP 1800+, a GeForce3Ti 500, and some 5.1 speakers.

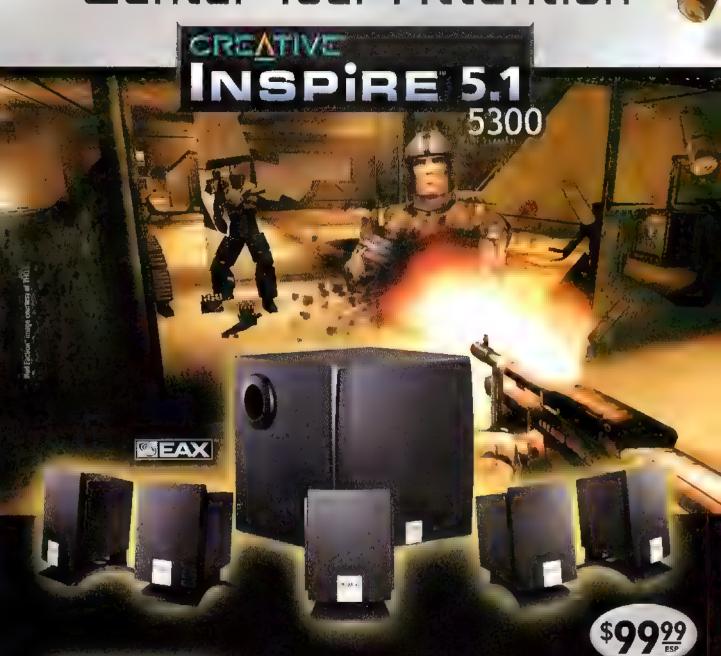
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VERDICT ***

The Omega is well out together its only real drawback wagn't really its faultthe big boys were able to out together rigs with superior components.

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t sported a 2GHz Intel Pentium 4, 512MB of RORAM, a 64MB GeForce3 card, and Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition, so it's an understatement to say that we were disappointed with the Gateway 700XL. While computers are more than the sum of their parts, this just takes the cake. The only right in this roundrup to score a sub-6000 ROMARK2001 score, the 700XL has a laster CPU and twice as much memory as the Zephyr PC, which nonetheless beat the 700XL in nearly every test.

We've always liked Gateway machines, so It's difficult to level so much criticism at a company that at least has good customer support. But facts are lacts. Adding benchmark insult to component injury, the 700XL ships with Boston Acoustics BA7500 speakers that in no way compare to Kripsch ProMedia 4 is and a SoundBlaster Live Value Sound card. We wouldn't be so quick to maign Gateway for going with Jast year's sound card if their gishipped with FireWire ports but, while the case has a spot for one on the front, the machine lacks FireWire support. Interesting.

Now that we're done bitching, we'll say that the 700XL's Mitsubish Diamondtron NF VX920 19 inch monitor is super crisp, and the BOGB Western Digital hard drive means that you'll probably never run out of disk space. We also liked Gateway's Multimedia Keyboard, and the 700XL's case is easy to open

We expected more from Gateway, considering all the components in the 700XL But as Dave Salvator is fond of saying "Hope springs eternal," Maybe next year.

PINELLED Gateway "In a www.gateway.com

VERDICT ** ANATAC

We expected more from Gateway with its great components. While you don't always get what you want, it is the cheapest muching in the roundup. Why someone would choose to get into the boutique PC market is beyond us. Not only has the PC market slowed down something herce, but the guys at the top-Fa con Northwest. Voodoo PC, Alienware, and Hypersonic PC-have such a lock on things that it seems almost impossible to break their grasp. This, of course, doesn't take into consideration companies like De-L Gateway, and Hewlett Packard.

The Zephyr PC doesn't sport the most form dable list of components: a lowly 1.8GHz Pentium 4 processor, 256MB of RDRAM, a first-generation GeForce3 card Cambridge SoundWorks FPS2000 speakers, and no DVD ROM drive. But the Zephyr PC still bested the more powerfully equipped Gateway 700XL. The aluminum case that the Zephyr ships with is stylish and easy to get into, but we were put off by the fact that the CD RW was spray painted black!

While the Zephyr PC is in no way in the same league as Farcon Northwest.

Alienware, and Voodoo, some of the components hint at the company's commitment to performance. The machine that we tested ships with Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition. Storage comes in the form of dual 7200 RPM 40GB IBM DeskStar hard drives controlled by a Promise Fastrack TX2 Dual Channe RAID Controller and the 19-inch Viewsonic G90b monitor is as nice as the others.

While we can't recommend the Zephyr PC this year, we're confident that if the company can stick around, they'll soon be pushing up on the big boys.

MANDAC WIR Zephyr PC (MVIA) www.zephyrpc.com ~ (\$2,949

VERDICT 大大大大

It's not easy being the little guy. And Zephyr's showing proves that. Their machine was well-built, but they were outclessed by the larger operations.







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The UGM Roundup

lanulacturer	Vaadoo	Falcon Northwest	Allenware	Hypersonic FC	Dell	GMachines	Zephyr PC	Gateway
lede)	Yeodoo MonsoonEGAD XP	Falcon Mach Y	Aurora DDR	Sonic Boom 5.f	De I Dimension 8200	Omega	Zephyr PC	Gateway 700XL
NO ZTVE	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$3,999	\$3,999	\$3,449	\$3.657	\$2,949	\$2.639
perating System	Microsoft Windows ME	Microsoft Windows XP Professional	Microsoft Windows XP Rome Edition	Microsoll Windows ME	Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition	Microsoft Windows ME	M crosoft Windows XP Home Edition	Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition
70 - 32	AMD Athlon XP 1800+ (1.533 GHz)	AMD Ath on XP 1800+ (1.533 GHz)	AMD Athlon XP 1800+ (1.533 GHz)	Intel Pantlom 4 2GHz processor	Intel Pentium 4 2GHz processor	Intel Pentium 4 1.86Hz processor	Intel Pentium 4 1.80Hz processor	intel Pentium 4 2GHz processor
lamery	256MB PC2100 DDR	512MB PC2100 DDR	256MB PC2100 DDR	256MB PC800 RDRAM	SIZMB PCBOD RDRAM	256MB RDRAM	256MB PCB00 ECC RAM	512MB PC800 RDRAM
leiherbeard	ASUS A7V266	Gigabyte GA7DX rev. 4.0	G gabyte GA7DX rev. 4.0	ASUS PAT 1850	TVA	ASUS P4T 850	ASUS P4T (850	Galeway
rapides Cord	A\$I Radeon 8500	Visiontek XTASY 64MB GeForce3Ti	Visiontek 11500 64MB Geforce311	Hercures 3D Prophet 1164MB GeForce3	Visiontex Ti500 64MB GeForce3Ti	64MB GeForce3	64MB GeForce3	64MB GeForce3
witer	NEC FE1250+ 22"	Viewsonic PZZOF 21"	NEC MultiSync FE1250+ 21"	NEC MartiSync FE950+ 19"	Dei UltraScan P991 19"	NEC Multisync FE1250+ ZI"	Viewsonic 690b 19"	Mitsubishi Diamondtron AF YX920 19
ard Drive entroller	Onboard EIDE	Promise Fastrack TX2 ATA/100 Dual Channel RAID		Prom se Fastrack TX2 ATA/100 Dual Channel RAID	Onboard EIDE	Promise Fastrack TX2 ATA/100 Dual Channel RAID	Promise Fastrack TXZ ATA/100 Dual Channel RAID	Integrated U tra ATA Controller
lard Drive	Western Dig tal 100GB	Twin JBM 40GB 7200 RPM	Twin 100CB	Twin IBM 40G8 7200 RPM	Western Digital 100GB	Twin Scagate Barracuda ATA (V 40GB 7200 RPM	Twin (BM 40GB, 7200 RPM	Western Digital BOGB Ultra ATA100
VD/CB-ROM	Ploneer 16x/40x Trayless DVD-ROM	Sony 16x/40x 0VD-ROM	Samsung 16x/40x	Toshiba 16x/40x OVD ROM	Samsung 16x/48x DVD-ROM	16x/40x DVD-ROM	N/A	Hitachi 16x/48x DVD-ROM
D-RW	H/A	Plexior 24/10/40X CD-RW	Plextor 24/18/40X CD-RW	Plextor Z4/10/40X CD: RW	Plextor 24/10/40X CD RW	Plextor 24/10/40X CD-RW	Plextor 24/10/40X CD:RW	HLData Storage CD-RW
peakers	Kilpsch ProMedia S.I	Kilpsch ProMedia 5.1	Kilpsch ProMedia 5.1	Klipsch ProMedia S.I	Altec Lansing ADA490	Klipsch ProMedia 4.7	Cambridge SoundWorks FPS2000	Boston Acoustics BA7500 Dolby Digital SST
ound Cord	SoundBlaster Audigy X-Gamer	SoundBlaster Audigy X-Gamer	SoundHiaster Aud gy Platinum EX	SoundBlaster Audigy MP3+	SoundBlaster Live Va Je	SoundBraster Audigy	SoundBlaster Live Yalue	SoundBlaster Livi Value
antreller(s)	hat went	N/A	M.crosoft SideWinder GamePad USB; Saitek Cyborg USB Gold Stick	H/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ayloard	Logitech Cordiess Freedom Optical w/ Cordiess Optical Mouse	MS Natural Pro Keyboard	Anlec	Key Tronic	Dell Mullimedia Keyboard	Log lech Cordless Koyboard	Black Keyboard w/ microphone	Gateway Muttimedia Keyboard
	Logifech Cordless Freedom Optical w/ Cordless Optical Mouse	MS Optical Mouse	MS ntellimouse Explorer	MS intermouse Explorer	MS Intellimouse 3.0 Explorer	MS Intellimouse 3.0 Explorer	Logilech Wheel Mouse USB	Logilech PS/Z Whee! Mouse
() temamous	GearGrip Carry ng System; 25' ethernet cable	EnerMax 365-waft power supply	Geartinp Carrying System; 25' athernat cable: Plantromics LS-1 headset	Diamond Multimedia Rio-digital audio receiver Innerworks Innerview Case Customization with blue fluorescent light	N/A	N/A	N/A	n/A

It's All About the Digits: The Numbers That Determined the Winner!

Onako III: Arena 14-bit	177 20	187	184	192.5	196.2	196.5	179.7	176 1
Ocako III: Arona 32-bil	74	184.6	(83.9	190.9	193.3	182 10	177.1	172.7
Here's Secretaries 16-410.	62.07	47.01	45.49	65.81	42.3	64.74	44.3	58,47
Especiable 32-bit	98.21	109.6	75.4	80.59	73.07	74.34	96.87	74.89
A-14212-11	224.5	256.4	254.5	275.6	261	255.9	240.6	192
30 GameGauge Z.S séors	136 02	141.54	127.28	140,48	122.70	131.1	120.01	113,18
30 WinMark 2000	280	267	262	252	263	252	222	208
3DMark2001	B341	7918	7899	7574	7567	7313	6845	5909
- 40								
FINAL SEGRE	2919.01	2775.51	2762.74	2655.50	2650.90	2565.37	2395.67	2076.73

Lette Metalic

You're at 11! Let's bring it down to about 5.

What are some durable roud speakers with a lot of bass? And what are the best speakers under \$100? I blew out the Boston Acoustics Digital BA735s that came with my Gateway. And then I blew out their replacements in a day.

Damn, dude, your bass sounds like it's way too crunk. First, when you're bumping Ludacris' "Area Codes," turn the bass down a little. Next, get decent speakers. That \$100 maximum is brutal, though. You should check out Cambridge SoundWorks FPS2000 Digitals. They're like \$150, but they can handle all the whack dirty south stuff that you're gonna throw at 'em.

Now it's "Which motherboard should I buy?"

I'm trying to piece together a new system and t need some opinions for a new motherboard. Whi e speed would be nice, my primary requirements are stability and compatibility. I'm not planning on overclocking, and lid like to avoid the "that hard drive won't work with this motherboard"-type of flasco. I a so do not want onboard video or audio, as I plan on getting a Geforce3 and a SoundBlaster Live And I have not committed to either a P4 or Thunderbird. Can you give me a few suggestions?

Steve Motley

I'm a big ASUS fan. If you build an Athlon-based machine, get an ASUS A7M266. If you build a Pentium 4-based machine, get an ASUS P4T.

Минин, МОМО

First, I'd like to give my sympathy on your son beating you on the PlayStation and to tell you I think you're a great addition to the magazine. What kind of steering wheel and pedals would you suggest I get? I am leaning toward Logitech.

Robert Sweet

Get the Logitech MOMO Force wheel, it's kind of expensive at nearly \$200, but it's super sweet. The pedal base won't silde around and the steering wheel is covered in leather-from, like, a cow.

What's your fan-t-t-asy?!

Hey, what's upi I want to keep up with technology, you know, update my compuler and buy the latest things. I'm curious as to what you would upgrade from this Del. 4100: Windows ME, Pentium, 1, 800MHZ, 128MB SDRAM, 32MB GeForce2 GTS graphics card, 20GB hard drive, 42x CD-ROM, 32x8x8 CD-RW SoundBlaster Live sound card, and Harman Kardon speakers. The system is decent-I can play awasome games with a so-so frame rate-but it's kinda slow at times. If I had money, what would I upgrade to improve speed?

Cleveland Bledsoe

I would stick with your current processor and hard drive and upgrade to 512MB of RAM, a GeForce3TI 500 graphics card, and a DVD-ROM drive.

Upgrade time for Mister Sangha!

I love your section of the magazine-it's the part I always read first. Tough tuck with your son whuppin' you. I'm thinking about apgrading my system similarly to December's Lean Machine. I figured I'd use the ASUS A7V-E motherboard with the AMD Duron 900 like yours but with my existing 192MB PC100 SDRAM, an ATI Radeon 8500 AGP instead of your Kyro, existing 13GB HD, existing Samsung 8x DVD, and a SB Live Value. So the only new parts would be the motherboard, processor, video card, and sound card. Suggestions on what I should use or not use in that list or what I should add? A rough estimate would also be preatly appreclated.

Prices keep dropping, so I've made what was once my Power Rig my Lean. Machine. Go with a 1.4GHz Athlon CPU and an ASUS A7A266 motherboardthat mobo has two DDR slots and three SDRAM slots, so using your existing memory shouldn't be a problem. Also, consider cetting at least a 20GB hard drive and one of the new Nyidia graphics cards like the GeForce2Tl. That card costs about \$150 and it kicks ass. (See December's Lean Machine for prices.)



Best Will Power Ever

, ne COW editors dove meetings, Whether it Buch-and-such on a tunch meeting to discussione of our my had redesigns; my coworkers have for these damn things. And today was no different as we gathered to discuss our ennual holiday sift quide

Of course the usual CGW high Jinks ensued: We insuited dup veunted lesser for heling an ell-loving. RPG-playing weuld be seventh-level necromancer (huh?), we tessed Talerry "Scooter" Nguyen about his recent foray into the wonderful voris of bunten sexuality (with enother personn)); and Robert Coffey entertained used on the common of the most disturbing, questicexus comments imaginable. Then, with about five minutes left someone blurted out. "What about

pretty/much now/this/one/went/ "More/importan

sections benind them they asked me what a heriward person would want for (wanzaa, Najvajy, it spems, took their suestion seriously, and told/emicric Processor and 512ME of DDR RAM, Logiteons
MOMO Force wheel, and
maybe some new speakers.
After a minute or se of
stunned silence, they all laughed at me, the popular

The Landson The state of milities william Irom CGW/s

turns saving things like. "Ook!" want a Sidewinde USB/P and 77 hope mommy buys me an optical

You know, what I find most ownshing about oil of this is that when someone tries to play a new can and it falls to work on their Voodoo 2, whom do yo think they come to begging for a \$400 GeForces card? That's right, yours truly. Or when the chimp opened that came with their PC spontaneously combust, in whose office will you find them asking if I just happen to have an extra set of Hilpschapeakers that I son't need "

So I'm plug away at the bustard stepchild that is my. Iftic increware section, knowing full well these may not get, a cover story any time soon, but whe the goodes start pouring in, it's ikely that i will once egain be the most popular kid on the block

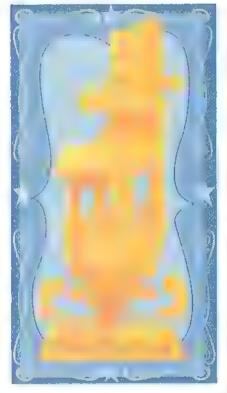
Greenspeak

Fourth Annual Greenspeak Awards

Let's laugh and cry over the year in gaming By Jeff Green

by, are you in luck this month, For only the fourth time ever n the whole history of this universe, it's time, once again, for the Greenspeak Awards, Yes, It's that special time of year when we shave our back hair, put on our fanciest black gaming T-shirts, and gather together to celebrate another wild and wacky year in gaming. This year's ceremony (held in the parking lot of the local Waffle Barn) was more exciting than ever, as those who watched 5.d Meler get naked and stage-dive during Huey Lewis' showstopping closing performance will attest. You go, Sid!

Though a great time was had by all, there was one conspicuous absence. Yes, I mean you, dear reader. For without you, these awards mean nothing. All the parties and glitz and furtive backstage groping don't mean a thing if there's no one to play the games. So here's to you. And while we're at it, here's to me, too, For without me, there'd be no Greenspeak Awards, and our lives would suck just that much more. So, c'mon everybody-group hug. Now let's pass out some awards!



write something that makes sense. I've seen lots of bad game writing in my day, but Max Payne's stunk like the felid cigarette breath of a washed-up, two-bit bum passed out in the back alley of hell.

Unfortunate Title of the Year

ClusterBall, from Strategy First. Maybe I have issues. Maybe it's because it sounds like something a guy my age would need ointment for All I know is there's no way I'd ask the clerk for this game, no matter how good it is. Runner-up: Gorasul from JoWood, for sounding like the ointment I'd need to get for my ClusterBall,

Bust of the Year

The Tomb Raider and Final Fantasy movies, for proving once again what we knew already. That movies based on games, no matter how promising they sound, will suck. So let's just give up on our Hollywood dreams and get back to the games, mmmkay? On the other hand, If Cinemax announces a ClusterBail movie, I'm there

Please Get This Off My Computer Now Award

To Bejeweled, Sometimes it's the most innocent looking games that are the most insidious. At first, this little puzzle game looks like something you'd get your grandma, if her hands still moved. Do not be fooled. This game is a timesink like no other. And if you are weak, if will suck you into that same hypnotic brain-freeze that Tetris did. You'll play until you're moving pieces around without even looking at them. Just one more game," you'll say. While all around you the world moves on.

Reality Check of the Year Award

To September 11. That day made our live-Thood and your hobby seem even more ridiculous than we already knew it was. Which is why we need it more than ever. Happy gaming all, and happy holidays.

What Jeff doesn't know is that the stall pitched in and bought him a case of Gorasul for the holidays. Send your own ClusterBall herbs and remedies to jeff_green@ziffdavis.com.

ClusterBall? Sounds like something a guy would need ointment for.

Least Fun Great Game of the Year

Black & White, I'm sorry, but I do not get this game. I know we gave it five stars and I know it's fashionable to respect it, like a PBS documentary, but I like to have a little fun with my gaming. This was like having another job-a bad one. Stressing about whether my pel monkey was gonna eat his own waste or trying to keep the whiny populace happy and fedjeez, I play games to get away from that type of pressure. If this is what being a god is like, forget it. I'll take Sim Peon.

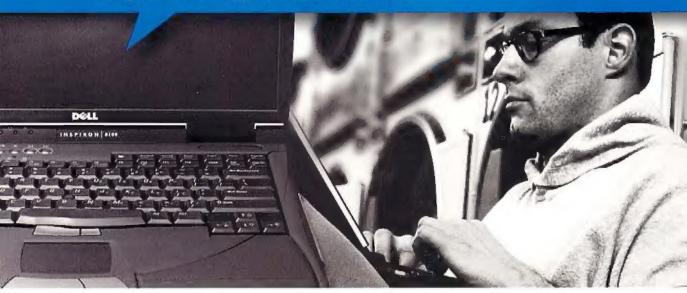
We Use Monkeys to Test Our Products! Award

Tie: Corpered Rat, Funcom, and Stormfront, for World War II Online, Anarchy Online, and Pool of Radiance, respectively. Bravo to all three companies for setting a new low in out-of-the-box game instability this year! The standards were already in the gutter, but these three managed to set the bar yards below sea level, with games that were appallingly bug-ridden and unplayable. Next time, guys, don't bother to compile the code. Just send us the lifes and we'll put the game together ourselves.

Your Posterior Shines Like Two Hairy, Shimmering Moons Award

To the dialogue writers of Max Payne, I do love this game, one of the year's best, easily, But, c'mon: "The sun went down with practiced bravado?" What does that even mean? If you're going to write faux-Changleresque noir, at least

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Dimension™ 8200 Desktop

Cutting-Edge Technology

- . Intel* Pentium* 4 Processor at 2.0GHz.
- 25GMB PC800 RDRAM
- . 40GB Ultra ATA/100 Hard Drive (7200 RPM)
- 17" (15.9" vis. 27dp) E771 Monitor
- . NEW 64MB NVIDIA* GeForce2 MX Graphics Card with TV-Out
- 18X DVD-ROM Drive
- . 18X/10X/40X CD-RW Drive with Rokro's Easy CD Creator*
- . Turtle Beach* Santa Croz* DSP Sound Card
- · Harman Kardon* HK-895 Surround Sound Speakers with subweeter
- 58K^c PCI Telephony Modern for Windows
- MS* Windows* XP Home Edition, MS* Warks Soite 2001
- 1-Yr Limited Warranty, 1-Yr At-Home Service, 1-Yr 24x7 Phone Support
- . 6 Months of Dell Net" by MSN" Internet Access

\$1899

Ask us about no payments for 90 days for qualified customers. E-VALUE Code: 90453-501118

Recommended approdes:

- Upgrade to 19" (18" vis, .26dp) M991 Monitor, add \$60
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty, 3 Yr At Home Service' upgrade, add \$139



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Processor and dual channel RDRAM, I've got more

power than you've ever seen. Whether it's mind-blowing 3D graphics, live video or realtime audio you seek, my 2.0GHz processor will more than satisfy your needs. And it all comes with my award-winning service and support team. So go online or call today. I'll show you how easy it is to build a computer that will make your heart skip a beat.



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